

ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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UNDERGRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM STRUCTURES FOR EFFECTIVE
POSTGRADUATION EMPLOYABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF A
MASS MEDIA ARTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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As a best practice, many postsecondary institutions in the United States use internships to provide students the option of maximizing their classroom learning with practical experiences. These experiences are not only intended to enhance students' classroom learning but also to increase their employment marketability upon graduation. The internship process involves three stakeholders—the institution, the students, and the employers—and is often managed by curricular and co-curricular departments. However, the manner in which the program is structured varies from institution to institution and even within the institution. Thus, understanding which structures of undergraduate student internship programs are most effective as an academic component of experiential learning is critical for the overall success of the internship programs.

This mixed-methods case study research was designed to examine the Mass Media Arts Department internship structure at the selected institution to identify the components most effective in the students' experiential learning experience. The study investigated the alignment between the institution's academic and co-curricular programs, as well as their participating interns' preparedness and their partner employers readiness. The study also examined the industry's best practices used by other institutions and recommended by national professional associations to align these variables.

Based on the findings of this study, the following four emergent themes were identified to effectively align and integrate the curricular and co-curricular departments, the interns, and the employers: (a) program structure, (b) student preparation, (c) employers' relations, and (d) program evaluation.

Future researchers can further examine these emerging themes to improve the relationship between student preparation as part of human capital and the roles of faculty and administration in aligning internship program processes.

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POSTGRADUATION EMPLOYABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF A
MASS MEDIA ARTS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Student internship programs, as an academic component of learning, are offered by institutions of higher education as an effective way to provide students the opportunity for hands-on practical experience as well as increase their employment marketability upon graduation (Cannon & Arnold, 1998; Gault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000; Getzel, Briel, & Kregel, 2000; Hymon-Parker, 1998; Kysor & Pierce, 2000; Reardon, Lenz, & Folsom, 1998; Swift & Russell, 1999). However, understanding which structures of undergraduate student internship programs are most effective as an academic component of experiential learning is critical for the overall success of the internship programs. The purpose of this study was to examine which undergraduate student internship program structures and components were most effective in experiential learning that can benefit in successful postgraduation employability of students. Although the concept of internship has not been used consistently through time, the method of skill acquisition in many occupations has been practiced since medieval times (Taylor, 1999). The term internship is a form of experiential education (also called experiential learning) and has been used interchangeably to include a variety of practical learning programs such as cooperative education, field experience/study/work, practicum, job shadowing, service learning, externship, and apprenticeship (Dewey, 1938; Flanagan, 2000; Lewis & Williams, 1994; Permaul, 1981).

Researchers around the globe have examined the many facets of internship programs in different fields of study. In Australia, Alpert, Heaney, and Kuhn (2009) conducted a study on goals, structure and assessment for undergraduate marketing internships. In Pakistan's Punjab region, a study on the outcomes of National Internship Program (NIP) for graduates during 2006 to 2010 was conducted by Batool, Ellahi, and Masood (2012). In the same region of Punjab, a study was conducted to measure graduate employability and students' orientation to labor market by Katyal and Arora (2013). In Hong Kong, a study on the determinants of internship effectiveness for university students was conducted by Phoebe (2010). In Taiwan, a study of the effect of internship experience on the behavioral intentions of college students majoring in leisure management was conducted by Chen, Hu, Wang, and Chen (2011). In Zimbabwe a study on challenges of internship in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programs was conducted by Bukaliya (2012). In the United States, several similar studies on internship programs in higher education have been conducted by Parilla and Smith-Cullen (1997), Beard (1998); Stone and McLauren (1999), Gault, Redington, and Schlager (2000), Briel and Getzel (2001), Gordon, Hage, and McBride (2001), Ross and Elechi (2002), Radigan (2009), Gault, Leach, and Duey (2010), and Jackel (2011), just to name a few.

Most colleges and universities in the United States organize student internship programs as a function of student support services through their career planning and placement unit. The internship process involves students, colleges and universities (academic programs and student support services), and employers. The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education (2006) states that the "primary

mission of internship [and co-op] programs is to engage students in planned, educationally-related work and learning experiences that integrate knowledge and theory with practical application and skill development in a professional setting” (p. 4).

According to National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2011), there are no agreed upon guidelines across higher education campuses by which educational institutions can define the term internships consistently and provide uniform objectives for various practices in learning experiences. According to Nancy O’Neill (2010), an Internet search for the definition of Internship “yields more than fourteen million responses...with some commonalities but also interesting differences” (p. 5). However, among several differing descriptions of internship, the most prevalent one is an exchange of services for hands-on learning experience between the student and his/her employer for a fixed period of time, such as a semester or quarter, part or full-time, can be paid or unpaid, and may or may not receive academic credit (DiLorenzo-Aiss & Mathison, 1996; Furco, 1996; Moore, 2010; NACE, 2011). The employers agree to mentor and teach students by providing job training to gain experience in a desired field or career.

After conducting a national survey of employer and college members and taking into consideration other related studies, NACE (2011) recommended the following definition:

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable

applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. (para. 1)

NACE conducted a survey of employers and educators in 2010 to examine how experiences often endorsed to students as internships were assessed. The study's goal was to determine if the educational value of the identified internship experience was the most important factor and what implications compensation had on such internship. NACE concluded that both professionals in career services and employers can work collaboratively to ensure that any experiential learning meets and adheres to a set of established criteria so that it can be legitimately considered an internship and can be ethically provided to students.

To this end, postsecondary institutions are expected to engage all stakeholders for nurturing, supporting and empowering today's student learners with a deep commitment to a lifelong learning environment within which students can develop, grow and thrive in a global context. Thus, colleges and universities are held responsible and accountable for providing students with relevant and practical knowledge, skillful competencies, and hands-on experiences to compete in worldwide marketplace.

College students can benefit from an internship experience for career clarification (Stone & McLauren, 1999), to determine if they have an interest in a particular career field (Reardon, Lenz, & Folsom, 1998), to create a network of contacts (Cates-McIver, 1998; Radigan, 2009; Tackett, Wolf, & Law, 2001) or to gain course credit (Ross & Elechi, 2002). Some interns may also find permanent paid employment with the

companies for which they interned (Cannon & Arnold, 1998). Many employers hire their successful interns as they need little or no training when they begin full-time regular employment (Pianko, 1996).

As a best practice, many colleges provide students the option of maximizing their classroom learning to hands-on experiences in real world situations. The classroom learning is articulated to achieve overall academic program content mastery, while the out of classroom learning reinforces and validates the application of theoretical and pedagogical knowledge, intellectual and practical skills, and affective disposition (Kuh, 2000; Storey, 2010). Linking curricular (classroom) and co-curricular (out of classroom) programming of an internship is critical to the student's preparation for educational and career goal achievement and ultimate postgraduation employability (Getzel, Briel, & Kregel, 2000; Williams, 2002). Institutions of higher learning are expected to create and maintain a structure that expose and assess curricular and co-curricular activities, communicate such opportunities accordingly, and collaborate to institutionalize these activities for student success in their professional careers and lifelong learning.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education, a consortium of 41 professional organizations founded 35 years ago, represents a wide range of student-oriented functions across higher education institutions (CAS, 2006). CAS creates, delivers, and promotes credible standards in student affairs that are aimed to foster quality student programs and services and to enhance student learning, development, and achievement. In its 44 sets of functional area standards developed for higher education programs and services, one goal of CAS is "to advocate experiential and

related forms of active or engaged learning, both within and outside the classroom or campus setting” (CAS, 2006, p. 228). CAS further describes internships as “an integral part of a college education” (p. 228) is a result of the “demand by students and parents for a more career oriented curriculum” and “much more accepted as part of the college experience” (p. 229). The CAS standards note the following:

What distinguishes internships from other forms of active learning is that there is a degree of supervision and self-study that allows students to “learn by doing” and to reflect upon that learning in a way that achieves certain learning goals and objectives. Feedback for improvement and the development or refinement of learning goals is essential. What distinguishes an intern from a volunteer is the deliberative form of learning that takes place. There must be a balance between learning and contributing, and the student, the student’s institution, and internship placement site must share the responsibility to ensure the balance is appropriate and that the learning is of sufficiently high quality to warrant the effort, which might include academic credit.

Setting standards for internship programs will establish for administrators, faculty and staff a set of benchmarks that identify what a quality internship program on a college campus should be. (p. 228)

According to CAS, “how colleges and universities can provide appropriate internship experience,” depends on “the various goals of the institution, the academic and student affairs division, and the student” and “emphasizes that careful thought, planning, administration, implementation, and feedback are important in the entire learning process

and that sufficient resources should be available to accomplish the established goals of the learning experience” (p. 228).

In order to meet the expected CAS standards, internship programs at an institution are the professional responsibility of both the academic departments that grant credit and have faculty assigned to oversee the experience as well as the co-curricular unit that provide career placement services. According to CAS, institutions are increasingly utilizing “third party organizations to place, supervise, and evaluate students because these organizations have dedicated personnel who are experts in these areas” (p. 229). This option is a clear indication of external agencies making advances in providing internship support services based on best industry standards that the institutions are unable to offer or maintain.

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U, 2007), the quality of the development and implementation of an internship program can affect intern experiences and the main reason is a lack of consistency and intentionality on the part of the institution:

Students today have many opportunities for “learning in the field,” including service-learning courses, internships, cooperative education, and community-based research... While all these experiences present rich opportunities for connecting knowledge with choices and action, too many are essentially “add-ons” in which students are left to their own devices for any insights gained. Students perform service on their own time; they find jobs and even internships independently of their academic studies. (p. 36)

AAC&U further posits that intentional institutions should integrate experiential learning into the curriculum:

To apply knowledge productivity in field-based setting, all students should experience in-depth questioning from faculty, staff, and other mentors about their assumptions, analyses, conclusions, and actions. Learners also need both guidance and feedback, from mentors and peers, as they probe the facets of a complex issue and test their own insights against both theory and the experience of others. (pp. 36-37)

Therefore, in order to develop transferable and marketable skills essential for innovation and organizational effectiveness, institutions should provide learners the opportunities to test their theoretical knowledge and methods learned in a course of study through application of analytical and practical skills and the ability to draw conclusions in the context of their learning. Such “learning by doing” is precisely what a well aligned internship program among all parties can provide.

One critical measure used to assess the success of postsecondary institutions’ effectiveness in performance and achievement is the students’ ability to gain employment after program completion (graduation). As a result, several regional and professional program accreditation organizations in the United States recognized by the Federal Department of Education require member institutions to include experiential learning (internships, practicum, practical experience, field experience, or co-op) as a part of academic program requirement to demonstrate classroom learning outcomes.

Professional program accrediting agencies such as the Association to Advance Collegiate

Schools of Business (AACSB) International, the American Psychological Association (APA), the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), to name a few, are including internships as a prerequisite for accreditation to be pursued in an institutional setting appropriate for the education and training of the profession. Therefore, many professional programs measure institutional success with respect to student achievement through the evaluation of fieldwork learning outcomes and job placement rates.

Also, recently under President Obama's administration, the U.S. Department of Education (2012) has designed a College Scorecard system requiring colleges to disclose to students and parents about college affordability and value, as well as, inform them about how many of its graduates get jobs, what kinds of jobs they get, and how much those graduates typically earn. This indicator is to determine the potential careers a particular postsecondary program or major prepares students to enter (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Thus, institutions are increasingly required by accreditors, legislators, and employers to demonstrate the intentionality and transparency of their academic programs.

Consequently, these standards require colleges and universities to play a primary role in providing students with the environment that promote personal growth and professional development opportunities through curricular and co-curricular programs and activities necessary for student preparation, achievement and success in global labor force. In addition, research on postsecondary education student learning supports the

notion that students who are engaged in out-of-class programs as part of their college experience are more successful in their personal growth and professional development (Astin, 1993; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, Andreas, Lyons, Strange, et al., 1991; Tinto, 1987).

According to Kuh (2000), on most college campuses student participation in an internship or coop activity is considered a highly visible form of in- and out-of-classroom learning experiences and students tend to participate in out-of-class activities that are closely related to what is required in the classroom. Kuh (2008) identifies 10 high impact practices (HIPs): (a) first-year seminars and experiences; (b) common intellectual experiences; (c) learning communities; (d) writing-intensive courses; (e) collaborative assignments and projects; (f) undergraduate research; (g) diversity/global learning; (h) service learning, community-based learning; (i) internships; and (j) capstone courses and projects. Kuh further comments that, “on almost all campuses, utilization of active learning practices is unsystematic, to the detriment of student learning” (p. 1). These HIPs involve students in more hands-on and collaborative forms of learning which Carey (2012) asserts are “strongly correlated with educational outcomes for students” (p. 3). According to Carey, “Educators have long known how important deep student engagement is to academic success” (p. 3). Consequently, today internships are an increasingly common form of experiential learning provided to students to engage them outside of the classroom.

Statement of the Problem

Postsecondary institutions have internship programs in place for students to apply classroom learning with practical experience in order to develop their theoretical

knowledge and intellectual and practical skills (Beard, 1998; Cook, Parker, Pettijohn, 2004; Hyman-Parker, 1998). There are three participants involved in any successful internship program: the institution, the student, and the employer (Cook, Parker, Pettijohn, 2004; Gault, Redington, Schlager, 2000; Lam & Ching, 2007 as cited in Bukaliya, 2012).

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2004), all parties must align program goals and objectives and fulfill their individual responsibilities in order to reap the potential benefits that internships provide. Since the success of student internship experience is predicated on the concept of integrative alignment of goals and expectations of the three stakeholders involved: the institution, the student and the employer, many higher education institutions find this approach challenging. Even though internships are designed to integrate curricular knowledge with practical learning experiences, in reality there is a mismatch between the specified objectives of programs and the actual hands-on experiences of students. Researchers have indicated that the evidence of consistent implementation of academic learning through connecting coursework and experience is limited. Internships are often treated like independent studies with very little supervision from the institution or its faculty associated with the curriculum (Bay, 2006; Howard & Linn, 2001; Mooney & Edwards, 2001; Moore 1981; Munby, Taylor, Chin, & Hutchinson, 2007; Parilla & Hesser, 1998). Several studies have also indicated that the internal quality alignment of institutional internship programs/services and requirements are not uniform (AAC&U, 2007; Belanger & Tremblay, 1983; Eyler, 2009; Hanson, 1984; Kuh, 2008); there is a lack of standards

for intern preparedness and performance assessment (Eyler, 2009; NACE, 2011; Scott, Ray, & Warberg, 1990); there is an absence of employer readiness structure to recruit and train interns (Eyler, 2009; SHRM, 2004; Thiel & Hartley, 1997; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000).

Based on external standards and benchmark of best practices by national professional organizations and accrediting agencies, institutions heavily invest in offering and supporting teaching modalities, pedagogical processes, and operational services within the classroom setting. However, many institutions do not always make similar efforts in providing out of classroom learning experiences even though real assessment of academic learning takes place in the employment setting. As a result in many cases, the critical experiential learning component in academic programs is often disregarded, underrated, minimized or placed as a low priority.

In most colleges and universities, professionals in co-curricular student programs and services, “are involved in teaching and learning, much of which occurs outside the formal classroom, and they form collaborative programs both inside and outside the college to address the diverse need of students and to foster student success” (Williams 2002, p. 67). Since curricular programs are coordinated in academic schools or departments and student services are coordinated through student affairs division, many colleges and universities do not consider them as interdependent (Engstorm & Tinto, 2000). At most institutions, co-curricular activities are coordinated and maintained outside of the academic areas in isolation and behave as independent entities within the

institution while remaining disconnected from each other and the common purpose or the value of the institution (Schroeder, 2005).

Postsecondary institutions are limited in developing students with innate personality traits such as, leadership, motivation, ambition, flexibility, mobility, and adaptability which are highly desirable by employers (Floyd & Gordon, 1998). However, they can aim at engaging in developing personal attributes and necessary key skills such as good citizenship, civic service, and lifelong learning to increase a student's employability. Furthermore, internship program structures within the postsecondary institutions and that of the organizations where the students are placed, as well as the academic quality that complement their level of preparedness, must be considered when developing such programs. It is also critical to consider student perceptions of their preparation for internships in order to gauge whether there is a disjunction between theory and practice. Moreover, performance assessment of internship participants can help measure how well they are prepared for different internships which may ultimately lead to employment opportunities.

Many companies that facilitate student intern programs do not have a structure that allows students to apply theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom with practical experience in the field. According to the Infographic Internship Survey and 2013 (<http://www.internships.com>), Internship Trends, only 47% of internship employer sites have the necessary structure to support student interns. The internship program structure of the organizations where the students are placed and the academic quality required to meet their level of preparedness must be considered when developing such programs.

The institution must acquire information about the internal processes and procedures of those organizations that are selecting student interns. In addition, strengthening relationships and communication with intern organizations can help employers develop four critical areas of intern placement: recruitment, student preparation and quality, internship structure, and supervision. In order to prevent failures in these significant areas, appropriate standards and guidelines with clear goals and objectives are needed. Employers should consider the following four key components of a successful internship placement program: (a) create a clear purpose and objectives for the internship program; (b) develop a clear formal orientation and training program to set interns' expectations of their internship; (c) provide a clear guidance and management structure; and (d) maintain an environment of balanced administrative and substantive work especially in regard to educational experience.

Because the internship programs require integration of the goals and expectations of the three parties—the institution granting the internship, the student seeking internship, and the employer providing the practical training—maximizing the student experience can become challenging, especially when measuring activities, outcomes and overall success of the program. Some of these challenges can be overcome by offering standards and policies that may decrease inconsistent practices (Kelley, 2004; Young & Baker, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine which undergraduate student internship program structures and components were most effective in experiential learning that can

benefit in successful postgraduation employability of students. The study investigated the collaborative relationships between the institutional curricular and co-curricular programs, participating interns, and industry employers. Figure 1 presents an illustration of the relationships and roles of the three stakeholders: the institution/department, the student, and the employer.

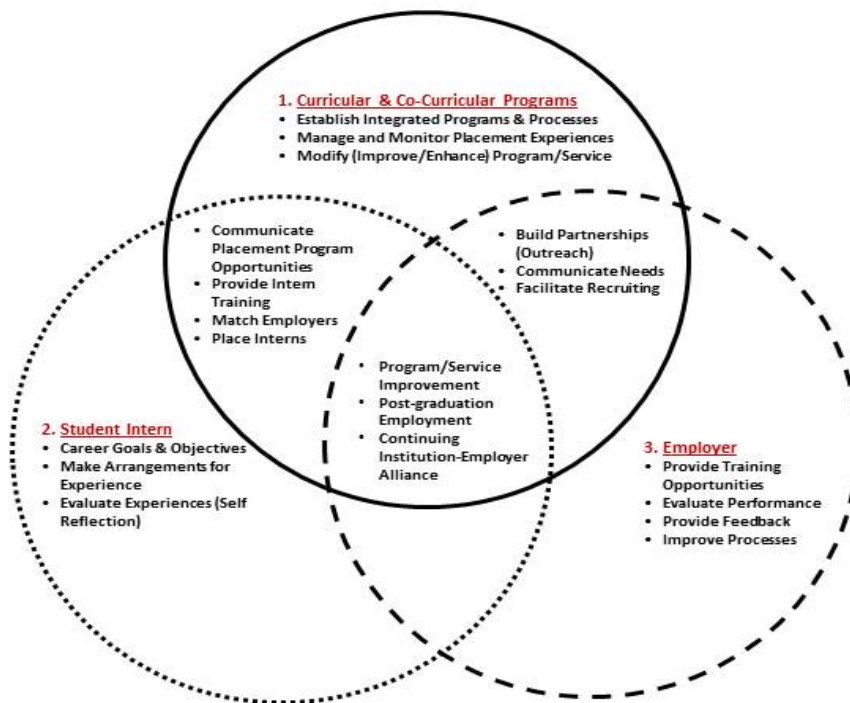


Figure 1: Alignment Structure of the Institution, Interns, and Employers (Adapted from Divine, Miller, Wilson, & Linrud, 2008)

Based on the researcher's familiarity with the case study institution and from direct and indirect interactions with the departments at the case study institution, there was a clear lack of integration of goals and expectations of its internship program among all stakeholders: the institution, the students, and the employers. There was also an

absence of collective program coordination between the academic departments and co-curricular services.

The case study institution offered over 15 undergraduate liberal arts and sciences programs which included internship courses as part of the curricula. Although these programs were designed to encourage students to do internships, these credit bearing courses were neither considered capstone projects nor required for graduation.

Informal conversations with the faculty members in general, indicated a lack of uniform standardization across the institution in regard to the internship program design, content and measurement. The majority of the undergraduate full-time faculty had an instructional load (classroom teaching) of 15 hours per term allowing them very little time for involving in external co-curricular activities and outreach initiatives. One department chair admitted neither having the expertise nor the training to develop such a program as well as build and maintain employer partnerships. Faculty felt a need for administrative support.

At the Mass Media Arts Department level, several internship program processes to assist interns, such as, resume building, understanding of the expectations of internship, identifying the actual supervisor and the amount of hours to be completed could have been better served through a collaborative effort with career services. The department chair serving as the coordinator of internships acknowledged a majority of intern placement within the institution's radio/TV station and commented on needing to do a better job in placing outside of the institution. The department chair also commented that most interns get placement on their own and the faculty does not control student

placement. Even though the internship is a course included as a part of the curriculum for majors in the Mass Media Arts Department, there was no written departmental plan or set policies specific to student internship program administration.

Similarly, informal conversations with students at the case study institution revealed a disconnect between the academic related requirements of internship courses offered, faculty guidance and oversight of the program courses, and support for securing placement related to classroom learning outcomes. Although there was a process in place for faculty to approve the student selected internship for credit, in most cases students were left on their own to seek employers and secure internship placement.

Direct and indirect conversations with career staff also indicated a decentralized approach for academic-related internships which were mostly handled by the individual departments. Again, suggesting a lack of centralized coordination between the academic departments and career services. Even though the departments do refer students to career services for internship placement from time to time, there was no reciprocal relation between the two areas. Neither career services nor academic departments have established listings of employers by majors or specific programs for placing interns. This study therefore, aimed at assessing best practices in internship programs that can be successfully applied and implemented by any institution of higher learning while seeking to identify best industry practices in internship programs to design an integrated and aligned process of curricular and co-curricular activities, student preparedness, and employer relationship structure.

The researcher examined the relationship between an academic department, its student interns, and its employers at one institution in order to develop a new model program for implementation across institutions of higher learning that can be used to effectively place college interns in experiential education to jump-start their successful transition to the workplace. This study was focused on an existing internship program offered in the undergraduate Mass Media Arts Department at one postsecondary institution. The researcher reviewed and evaluated their internship structure designed as an academic component of experiential learning for preparing students to successfully transition to employment upon graduation as well as managing their career effectively thereafter.

Significance of A Model

As NACE (2011) has indicated, all three parties—the institution, the student, and the employer—involved in any successful internship program should work collaboratively to ensure that any experiential learning meets and adheres to a set of established criteria so that it can be legitimately considered an internship and can be ethically provided to students.

At a minimum, an ideal internship program should integrate the academic knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting; provide well-written documented learning objectives with clear direction and targeted goals for the interns; prepare interns to gain valuable applied experience and to make connections in professional fields for career

paths; establish or maintain alliance with sponsoring employers to train, guide, develop and evaluate potential employees.

This arrangement can be accomplished through a well-designed standard model drawn from a variety of current industry perspectives and effective practices in place to best align, support and fulfill the needs of all parties involved. An ideal model should be able to guide universities or sponsoring organizations in developing, enhancing or maintaining a successful lasting internship program. Such a model should outline steps necessary to guide and assist educational institutions and their partnering organizations to establish or improve successful internship programs in order to provide substantive work experiences that can support students' academic and career goals; provide valuable information for both the internship seeker and the internship provider such as the list of responsibilities and the benefits for all participants, a dynamic, searchable database, referral and reporting assistance, preparation for internship, guidance and resource materials, and a process for matching and linking employers for hiring interns.

Research Questions

The research for this study employed a mixed method within a framework of quantitative and qualitative data (Plano, Clark, & Creswell, 2007). Quantitative data (a survey) was collected from interns in the Mass Media Arts Department at the institution under study who answered the Research Questions 1 and 5. This was a group of subjects who were exposed to the variable under study. Qualitative data (semistructured interviews and document reviews) were collected from the institution's administrators of the internship program in Career Services Center and the Mass Media Arts Department

chair and school dean to address the Research Questions (RQ) 1 and 8. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to address the ways in which the institution can enhance student internship programs through the following research questions:

- RQ1: What are the understandings of the institution's professionals regarding the expectations and success of the internship program activities?
- RQ2: How does the internship program structure impact the success of experiential education?
- RQ3: How are academic programs designed to prepare interns for on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?
- RQ4: How does the evaluation of the internship program impact the overall program structure?
- RQ5: What curricular and co-curricular support processes are designed to prepare interns for successful placement?
- RQ6: How does student preparation impact their on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?
- RQ7: How does student perception of their level of preparedness for internship impact their performance/experience?
- RQ8: What internship program structure does the employer have for appropriate intern placement?
- RQ9: How does the employers' level of readiness for interns meet the institution's expectations?

RQ10: How does the relationship between the institution and the potential employer impact interns' placement rates and their employment?

Significance of the Study

There is an increasing importance of internships. In the early 1980s, only 3% of college students completed an internship before graduation and by 1999, more than 80% of college seniors completed at least one internship experience. The number of colleges and universities offering internship or co-op has increased from 200 to 1,000. According to a NACE (2012) survey, 70% of interns are more likely to be hired as full-time employees at a company and 66% of employers think work-relevant experience is the most critical factor in their hiring decisions.

Today, getting hired full-time as a result of interning is much higher because many businesses use participation in internships as a means to train and develop potential full-time employees. According to NACE (2011), 57% of employers offered jobs to their interns in 2001 compared to 70% in 2008. A survey of interns conducted by Intern Bridge in 2011 (as cited in Carey, 2013) indicated that of the students getting credit, 33% of the interns did not receive a formal supervisor evaluation; only 15% were visited by an advisor or faculty member at the work site; and 41% of the interns were not required to present a paper or make a presentation.

The Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates (Becker, Vlad, Desnoes, & Olin, 2010) conducted of bachelor's degree recipients in 2009 indicated: 13.1% felt their college experience did not adequately prepare them for the real world experience of which 25% responded that they had not been given skills to help find

a job and lacked basic skills of the field needed for a job and 31.8% regretted their choice of this major and wished they had selected another career. The same survey by Becker et al. repeated in 2013 showed: 26.7% graduates felt the college did not prepare them for today's job market and 27.8% regretted their choice of this major and wished they had selected another career. This data clearly indicate that more students are facing a system that lacks a structure or has rules that differ extensively across all colleges, or even among departments within colleges, as they try to achieve their career goal of getting a job that pays well. There are few studies conducted worldwide that provide a unified best practice model for aligning internship program structure between postsecondary institutions, employer organizations, and student participants that can result in an experience leading to successful postgraduation employment.

This single institution case study was to contribute theoretically to the few studies previously conducted, specifically relating to the alignment of institutional structure, student participant preparedness (identity development and self-efficacy) and organizational/employer structure with regard to each party's expectations of entry into the workforce. The data gathered from this study will be beneficial to institutions for linking academic programs to experiential learning, and meeting potential employer expectations as well as making decisions to improve and strengthen institutional policies and approaches related to student preparedness for internship placement opportunities. The findings from this study will further provide pertinent information to key educational practitioners and stakeholders in the industry in order to respond to the challenges institutions of higher education face in regards to the academic-based experiential

preparation of its graduates to meet the changing demands of the employers and that of today's workforce.

Finally, the results of this study will offer a model of exemplary strategies for educators and intern employers to implement and pursue uniformly. It will provide educational institutions and the industry with integrated best practices in placing interns for experiential learning that result in ultimate hiring. In this study, the appropriate alignment of the institutional program structure, student career objectives, and employer demands and expectations was explored, explained and expanded upon to maximize overall effectiveness. This alignment was of great significance to educational leaders. Specifically, it can be beneficial to higher education institutions in creating a sound and responsive internship program for long-term sustainability. In addition, for students it can result in successful internship placement, performance, and ultimate postgraduation employment. Furthermore, employers can gain skilled workers readily trained to enter the labor market.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the purpose of this study which was to examine student internship programs as an academic component of learning offered by institutions of higher education. Internship, a form of experiential learning, is defined as exchange of services for hands-on learning experience between the student and his/her employer, for a fixed period of time. The internship process, which involves three stakeholders, the institution/department, the student, and the employer, is considered an

effective way to provide students hands-on practical experience and increase their opportunities for employment marketability upon graduation.

The problem presented in this study was threefold: (a) the internal alignment of institutional internship programs/services and requirements were not uniform, (b) there was a lack of standards for intern preparedness and performance assessment, and (c) there was an absence of employer readiness structure to recruit and train interns. The study was designed to examine the relationship between the academic department, its student interns, and its employers at one postsecondary institution in order to develop a new model program for implementation across institutions of higher learning that can be used to effectively place college interns to jump-start their successful transition to the workplace. This chapter also presented the research questions developed to address the problem identified as well as the contribution of this study to the existing body of work and its significance to higher education institutions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RESEARCH LITERATURE

Organization of the Review

The purpose of this study was to examine which undergraduate student internship program structures are most effective as an academic component of experiential learning that can benefit all parties involved and contribute to the overall success of students practical experience and opportunities for postgraduation employability. This chapter examines topics that address the status of internship programs in higher education institutions. It describes the history and chronological evolution of internships. Secondly, the theoretical foundations of internships in higher education are described to include internship standards, goals, structures, and processes for the program. Thirdly, specific linkage between academic performance and career development and the impact of internships in Mass Media Arts are discussed. Lastly, the structures for student preparedness and employer readiness for internships are reviewed.

This study investigated the collaborative relationships between the institutional curricular and co-curricular programs, participating interns, and industry employers. See Figure 1 in Chapter I for an illustration of the relationships and roles of the three stakeholders—the institution/department, the student, and the employer.

This study, therefore, was aimed at assessing best practices in internship programs that can be successfully applied and implemented by any institution of higher learning

while seeking to identify best industry practices in internship programs to design an integrated and aligned process of curricular and co-curricular activities; student preparedness; and employer relationship structure.

The researcher studied the relationship between an academic department, its student interns and its employers at one institution in order to develop a new model program for implementation across institutions of higher learning that can be used to effectively place college interns in experiential education to jump-start their successful transition to the workplace. This study focused on an existing internship program offered in the undergraduate Mass Media Arts Department at one postsecondary institution. Because most postsecondary institutions have on-campus career development and placement programs which provide students with comprehensive career related services that directly or indirectly link academic and career objectives, this study also focused on the primary role and responsibility of the Career Services Center at the institution in fulfilling their academic support expectations. Career services should essentially be used as a major resource that the Mass Media Arts Department can leverage to strengthen their internship program.

The researcher reviewed and evaluated the case study institution's internship structure designed as an academic component of experiential learning for preparing students to successfully transition to employment upon graduation as well as managing their career effectively thereafter.

Mass Media Arts Program—A Brief Description

The current undergraduate catalog (2014) of the case study institution describes the program as follows:

The Department of Mass Media Arts provides students with rigorous academic and professional training that is complemented by a strong liberal arts education. The department curriculum prepares students for careers in the mass media as well as in entertainment, politics, personnel management, advertising, education, business, public relations, public service, speech arts and civil service.

The Department of Mass Media Arts constantly reviews trends in the media industries and recognizes that students need to be prepared to move forward in the 21st century in their understanding and use of media technology. To accomplish this, training laboratories are provided to enhance the students' abilities in their coursework and to assist in practical, hands-on, interactive experiences. Students are educated and trained to be proficient in research skills, critical thinking and analytical abilities, and the use of multimedia and new media technologies as well as talented, creative media experts in their chosen fields of concentration.

Communication leadership skills are stressed throughout matriculation. (p. 129)

Career Services Program—A Brief Description

The current undergraduate catalog (2014) at the case study institution describes the program as follows:

The Career Services program plays an integral part in the professional development of students by encouraging integrity, social responsibility and

respect while providing opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to pursue meaningful careers in a variety of professional and occupational fields. We strive to increase our partnerships with corporate, governmental and other agencies to enhance student career placement. (p. 69)

The Office of Career Services provides assistance in formulating and implementing individual career plans. Various programs and workshops are offered each semester to assist students with relating educational experiences to employment opportunities. Career services works with students during all phases of the career development process. Our services include individual career planning, resume development, mock interviews and professional development workshops.

History of Internship

A college internship is an out-of-classroom experiential learning performed as on-the-job training for professional careers. These positions are usually temporary and may be paid or unpaid, with or without college credit. Due to a lack of standardization and oversight responsibility for internship programs across colleges and universities, the term internship remains open to broad interpretation. Although an internship normally culminates as a capstone educational experience for college seniors with an organization related to their respective major field of study, some students begin as early as their freshman or sophomore year simply to explore and determine their interest in a particular career, earn college credit, as well as connect with potential employers for paid permanent employment after graduation (Cates-McIver, 1998; Getzel, Briel, & Kregel,

2000; Giles & Ryan, 2002). Employers also benefit from this relation in that experienced interns often need very little or no training at all when they begin regular employment. Over the past several decades, the importance of internships for securing full-time work after graduation has become a reality and more of a requirement rather than an opportunity (Haire & Oloffson, 2009). Today, on-the-job-training known as internship barely resembles what used to be called apprenticeship in the Middle Ages, even though they both share the same purpose of cultivating potential new workers to enter the labor force (Haire & Oloffson, 2009).

According to the trade guilds of England, in the 11th century a worker would pay to learn from a master trainer who would teach in any field of skilled labor. This training could last several years and would start as early as age 16 and in many cases, the apprentice would depend upon the master for food, clothing and shelter. In 18th century, upon the arrival of the Industrial Revolution this practice eventually disappeared and a new trend toward general factory work called for vocational schooling (Haire & Oloffson, 2009). In the 20th century, apprenticeships in some industries reappeared and were regulated by trade unions and laws. The National Apprenticeship Act, passed in 1937, led to the establishment of the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training in the U.S. Department of Labor, which works with employers, labor groups and schools to promote apprenticeship programs (Haire & Oloffson, 2009).

After World War I, a medical school was no longer seen as preparation enough for practice. Therefore, the term *intern* was used to define a person in the medical profession as a physician in training with a degree but without a license to practice (Haire

& Oloffson, 2009). Later on, the term was applied in politics replacing the term *apprentice* to reference those interested in learning about careers in government.

In the meantime, cooperative education programs evolved in institutions of higher learning. These programs provided students to work at a company for an extended period of time while attending college. In the 1980s, as average private college tuition reached to about \$9,000 co-ops provided students an opportunity to earn money to meet the increasing cost of education while gaining hands-on experience (Haire & Oloffson, 2009). From 1970 to 1983, the number of postsecondary institutions offering co-ops increased from 200 to 1,000 (Haire & Oloffson, 2009). In the United States, the University of Cincinnati was the first postsecondary institution to launch a co-op education program in 1906 and within 20 years more than a dozen institutions including Northeastern University (1909), Kettering University (1909), University of Pittsburgh (1910), University of Detroit (1911), Georgia Institute of Technology and Rochester Institute of Technology (1912), University of Akron (1914), Drexel University (1919), and Harvard University (1920) adopted similar programs on their campuses (Cerdercreutz & Cates, 2010; Weible, 2009). Co-op programs were initially designed for students to work in a company for a certain amount of time during the school year and try out careers while earning money to pay for their tuition (Haire & Oloffson, 2009). The program took an extra year to earn a bachelor's degree. The co-op program did not become popular until the 1960s. Similar to co-op the internship programs did not develop until the 1960s and were uncommon at the beginning. The internship programs were initially promoted as an opportunity for students to connect to their academic program

while exploring their career options (Haire & Oloffson, 2009). The internship has become the norm for students looking to gain valuable on-the-job experience before being handed their diplomas, but today's internships are a far cry from their predecessor (see Table 1).

Table 1

The Chronology of Internship Evolution

Date	Description
1100 (11th Century)	The apprenticeship program, known as the great-grandfather of internship, was born as the Guild System. Apprentices were defined as individuals who learned by practical experience under skilled worker of a trade, art, or calling.
1562	Statutes of Artificers passed, requiring apprenticeships for anyone wishing to practice a trade.
Early 1900s	The Industrial Revolution transitioned from trades into professional workplaces through more formalized professional education. In 1906, the first academic internship program was created in the U.S. in the Accounting Department at the University of Cincinnati.
1937	The National Apprenticeship Act was passed to establish the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training in the U.S. Department of Labor.
1960	The college co-op programs as temporary employment of college students at a company began to transition into modern-day internship programs.
Early 1980s	Only 3% of college students completed an internship before graduation.

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Date	Description
1999	More than 80% of college seniors completed at least one internship experience. The number of colleges and universities offering co-ops or internships increased from 200 to 1,000.
2012	Getting hired full-time as a result of interning is much higher. According to the 2012 NACE Survey, 7% of interns are more likely to be hired as full-time employees at a company and 66% of employers think work-relevant experience is the most critical factor in their hiring decisions.

Note. Adapted from *The Evolution of the Internship [Infographic]* by Heather R. Huhman, 2013.

The Evolution of Internship

Many experts agree that an internship is a valuable part of career development (Spradlin, 2009). The practice of internships has descended from professional apprenticeships that originated with *The Trade Guilds* of Europe during the 11th and 12th centuries. Master craftsmen and tradesmen would take in young apprentices who served them for most of their teen years and graduated as journeyman to earn good wages. Often, apprentices would choose to continue to work with the same masters they trained. The guild system eventually succumbed to industrialization and to the augmentation of formal professional education (Sides & Mrvica, 2007). The 1911 book, *Boy Labour and Apprenticeship* by Reginald Bray, describes the key objectives of the apprenticeship which included supervision, training and filling job openings. Although these objectives

are similar to current internship systems, the difference is that apprenticeships were clearer in structure compared to today's internships.

From the 1890s to 1920s, fields such as medicine adapted the practical experience of apprenticeship into training that was more of a scientific rather than lecture-based nature. The practical experience of apprenticeship similar to the field of medicine was applied to other professional fields like social work, engineering, education and business which combined academic knowledge and practical skills, with certification of some sort, internal governance, and an ethos of social responsibility (Spradlin, 2009).

In the late 1960s, formal internships as we know them today started to appear because of an increase in demand for knowledge workers (Spradlin, 2009). Internships became an important recruiting tool in the finance, entertainment and health care industries. During the 1980s, internships were developed first by business schools in fields like business and communications. Internships became a great vehicle to gain real-world experience and connect with employers. Between the late 1970s and 1980s, academic community in higher education began to establish internship programs as a best practice followed by colleagues at other institutions. Colleges took the lead in developing internships as a curricular approach to student learning by offering them as course for credit. Academic advisers and co-curricular career counselors pushed internships as a way to get ahead in competing for jobs after graduation. However, as internships became popular and more commonly available, students began to use them as a means to gain hands-on experience in the field and validate whether their career choice was appropriate. Secondly, internships provided students the opportunity to learn first-hand the expectation of their future employers. One side effect to this experience is that some interns may not be

properly motivated. Even though internships have proven to be effective in preparing many graduates for today's labor market, there are students who intern only to earn course credit or gain the work experience to put on their resumes and are very likely to take internships that don't advance their academic related careers (Spradlin, 2009).

Internships in Higher Education

In postsecondary institutions, the field of experiential education (often used synonymously with experiential learning) includes practices such as internships, cooperative education, field studies, clinical practica, job shadowing, work-based learning, game-based learning, community-based research, project-based learning, study abroad and service-learning. The process of learning through experience or learning by doing is not a new concept in college classrooms.

Since the early 1900s, American higher education has provided internships or other forms of practical learning opportunities for college students to apply classroom learning of academic theories and practical skills to real-world settings (Dube & Miller, 1988; Howard, 2004; Radigan, 2009). The book, *Experience and Education* by John Dewey published in 1938 on educational philosophy of pragmatism, enumerates the most significant ideals of experiential education.

Experiential learning is a critical process in postsecondary education that focuses on direct learning through experience as well as reflection on learning. Felicia (2011) defines it as "learning through reflection on doing" (p. 1003). Kolb (1984b) referenced that the idea of experiential learning draws on the intellectual contributions of several notable 20th century scholars in various fields of psychology such as John Dewey, Kurt

Lewin, Jean Piaget, William James, Carl Jung, Paulo Freire, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow and many more who gave “experience” a central role in their theories of human learning and development. Based on the work of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget, Kolb (1984c) further developed the experiential learning theory and defined it as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the contribution of grasping and transforming experience” (p. 41). According to Kolb, in order to continually acquire knowledge from personal and environmental experiences, the following four student learning outcomes are necessary: (a) willingness to be actively involved in the experience; (b) ability to reflect on the experience; (c) ability to possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience; and (d) ability to possess decision-making and problem-solving skills in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience.

Internship Standards

The closest experts have come to agree regarding a set of best practice standards for internship programs in higher education based on the work of Arthur Chickering and Zelda Gamson (1987) known as The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education: (a) Encourages contact between students and faculty; (b) Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students; (c) Encourages active learning; (d) Gives prompt feedback; (e) Emphasizes time on task; (f) Communicates high expectations; and (g) Respects diverse talents and ways of learning. Collectively, these principles provide a strong foundation for effective teaching and learning with a focus on

improving undergraduate education for students and faculty members in colleges and universities.

Internship Goals, Structures, and Processes

Giles and Ryan (2002) advocate the following goals, structures and processes of internship programs as a best practice in undergraduate education.

Goals of Internship

The ultimate goal of all internships is to provide students with the opportunity to apply learning and gain hands-on experience. Educational internships are usually credit-bearing and are academically linked to the curriculum with specific learning outcomes beyond career exploration or basic theory-based learning. Curriculum related internships typically share common objectives in-classroom which include enhancement of intellectual and practical skills such as reading, writing, critical thinking, and problem solving. Nonacademic internships are often noncredit bearing and are limited to the scope of work experience and related learning outcomes. Internships can be part-time or full-time which can impact students' real-world learning significantly (Giles & Ryan, 2002).

In Giles and Ryan (2002), according to Ryan, who was the executive director of the Institute for Experiential Learning, in Washington, DC, there were many goals related to specific internship programs or courses. The most common goals of internship that benefited students included the following:

- Engaging the intern in the discipline or major;
- Causing interaction with a variety of individuals, systems, and organizations
- Improving self confidence;

- Using a variety of learning styles and frequently challenging participants to use new ways of learning and thinking;
- Improving skills in research, communication in groups, interpersonal communication, and observation;
- Improving critical thinking and problem-solving skills;
- Personalizing learning, giving it relevance and meaning;
- Putting learning into context to improve understanding and retention of concepts;
- Providing networking and mentoring opportunities;
- Conditioning the participant to adapt to change;
- Frequently challenging attitudes and beliefs, which often change;
- Helping a participant grow emotionally and learn from failure and success;
- Helping an intern become a more motivated life-long learner.

Setting internship program goals can help the institution determine which structures will benefit students the most during different phases of their education.

Structures of Internship

For successful internship programs, it is important for all institutions to have sound administrative, instructional and educational support structures within and among institutions of higher learning. Even though the scope of these structures may vary from campus to campus and program to program, there are similar experiential learning components such as: (a) participating in internship related activities; (b) writing action plans for such learning; (c) engaging in reflection of the experience; (d) writing and

presenting a culminating paper or project assignment; (e) participating in performance evaluation; and (f) creating a showcase of the capstone learning portfolio (Giles & Ryan, 2002). These components support Dewey's (1938) theory that define educational experience as an intentionally structured curricular and co-curricular institutional process that include all learning activities from field experience to reflective practice.

Processes of Internship

There are several existing internship process models that higher education practitioners can ascribe to help interns overcome challenges in learning and achieve competence. Suelzle and Borzak (1981) for example, have designed a four-stage internship process of: (a) entry, (b) initiation, (c) competence, and (d) completion. This process allows interns to view the semester-long cycle and become familiar with what they should learn and how they must perform at each step of the process. Another five-stage internship process established by Sweitzer and King (1999) include: (a) anticipation, (b) disillusionment, (c) confrontation, (d) competence, and (e) culmination. This process can guide interns to predict and recognize the issues that are associated with internships. Regardless of which internship process model the institution uses, it is critical for student interns to be mindful of the application of knowledge, gains in the mastery of learning and the level of competence they should be achieving.

In summary, educational research supports the need for goals, structures and processes so that curricular and co-curricular learning and assessment takes place as a holistic learning process. However, because of a lack of common standardized practices in internship programming among higher education institutions, there are no defined

standards that exist for qualifying, comparing and assessing various types of internships that students pursue in support of their chosen academic career.

Linking Academic Performance and Career Development

In recent years, internships in postsecondary education have gained massive popularity. Faculty recognizes the significance of internships as a part of academic preparation necessary for students to enter careers beyond graduation (Cates-McIver, 1998). Students are also realizing that participation in experiential learning such as internships and co-op education provides best opportunities to build an invaluable network of contacts which can ultimately result in successful career placement (Cates-McIver, 1998; Radigan, 2009). College students with internship experience are also likely to find employment in their field faster after graduation compared to those without any or very little career related experience (Kysor & Pierce 2000; NACE 2012; Radigan, 2009).

Employers are looking for workers with a college degree and abilities that are demonstrated through application of their academic knowledge, intellectual skills and practical work experience (Reardon, Lenz, & Folsom, 1998). Employment industries look toward postsecondary institutions to fulfill their future workforce needs and are demanding for individuals who are critical thinkers, problem-solvers and responsible team players actively engaged in the learning process (Karakaya & Karakaya, 1996; Kelly & Gaedeke, 1990). Employers through practical experience such as internships are invested in the outcomes of higher education especially preparing the future labor force that can meet the demands of business community.

Curricular-based internship opportunities provide students to attest their career interests, and solidify their career goals while gaining transferable skills sought by employers as well as help students gain employment after graduation (Getzel, Briel, & Kregel, 2000). Participation in curricular-based internship can help students' academic performance as long as the hands-on work is closely related to their career aspiration (Reardon, Lenz, & Folosom, 1998). Reardon et al. further posits that employers consider internship experience to be very important when recruiting graduates for entry-level employment. In fact, many businesses actually use participation in internships as a means to train and develop potential full-time employees. Such experience certainly strengthens a graduate resume and prospects for future job.

Furthermore, several studies have indicated that work-based experiential learning opportunities such as internships and cooperative education are important and effective elements that enable college students to apply hands-on academic knowledge, competencies and practical skills to the real work environment (Beard, 1998; Cook, Parker, Pettijohn, 2004; Furco, 1996; Hyman-Parker, 1998; Lubbers, 2000; Patton & Dial, 1988; Radigan, 2009; Verney, Holoviak, & Winter, 2009). In a 2001 survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers reported offering jobs to 57% of their intern class. By 2008, that number had reached 70%. According to NACE, there are as many as 300,000 students participating in some form of pre-job apprenticeship in the U.S. each year, a number that has increased 10% over the past five years. A survey of the class of 2013 conducted by NACE found that 63% seniors had an internship or cooperative education experience.

In recent years, internships have become the norm in American higher education because colleges, students and employers are all increasingly connecting the intricacies of credentialing, job training and career interest that impact success in postgraduation employment (Carey, 2013). Thus, college internships have evolved from a union of two distinct entities, the institutions of higher learning and business organizations, with very different missions. They both offer value to students, from the organization students benefit workplace experience and connections, while from colleges they earn credits toward degree.

According to a survey conducted by Intern Bridge in 2011 (as cited in Carey, 2013), of the 8,939 interns surveyed, 33% did not receive a formal supervisor evaluation; only 15% were visited by an advisor or faculty member at the work site; 41% were not required to present a paper or make a presentation. This data clearly indicate that more and more students are facing a system that lacks a structure or has rules that differ extensively across all college campuses, or even among departments within colleges, as they try to achieve their career goal of getting a job that pays well. According to Rosario, Flemister, Gampert, and Grindley (2013), in order to launch an effective internship program, academic leaders must work in collaboration with the community and include everyone affected in the process of decision-making.

In 2010, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) conducted a survey of employers and educators to examine how experiences often promoted to students as internships were assessed. The study's goal was to determine if the educational value of the identified internship experience was the most important factor as

well as what implications compensation has on internship. NACE concluded that professionals in career services and employers can work collaboratively to ensure that any experiential learning meets and adheres to a set of established criteria so that it can be legitimately considered an internship and can be ethically provided to students.

Impact of Internships in Mass Media

In the United States there are several professional program accreditation organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education that require member institutions to include internship experience (also known as, practicum, practical experience, field experience, and co-op) as a part of academic program requirement to demonstrate classroom learning outcomes. For example, the Professional Values and Competencies in Standard 2 (Curriculum and Instruction) of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, regardless of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to, “apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world” (ACEJM, 2013, p. 2). This standard is measured by the indicator 2(e) that states,

The unit advocates and encourages opportunities for internship and other professional experiences outside the classroom and supervises and evaluates them when it awards academic credit. Schools may award academic credit for internships in fields related to journalism and mass communications, but credit should not exceed six semester credits (or nine quarter credit hours). Students may take up to two semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at an appropriate

professional organization where the unit can show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the unit's faculty and professionals. Students may take up to three semester courses (or their quarter equivalent) at a professional media outlet owned and operated by the institution where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media outlet is to instruct students. (p. 2)

The evidence for meeting this standard requires records and statistics on and evaluations of internships, with and without academic credit.

Based on such external standards and benchmark of best practices by national professional organizations and accrediting agencies, institutions heavily invest in offering and supporting teaching modalities, pedagogical processes, and operational services within the classroom setting. However, institutions do not always make similar efforts in providing out of classroom learning experience even though real assessment of academic learning takes place in the employment setting. As a result in many cases, the critical experiential learning component in academic programs is often disregarded, underrated, minimized or placed as a low priority.

According to the 2009 Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates (Becker et al., 2010), 13.1% of respondents felt their college experience did not adequately prepare them for the real world experience. One in four of these respondents further complained that they had not been given skills to help them find a job and they lacked the basic skills of the field needed for a job. A third of the bachelor's degree recipients with a degree in journalism and mass communication in this study also indicated that they wished they had chosen a different field.

The 2012 Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates (Becker, Vlad, Simpson, & Kalpen, 2013) reported similar results; while 6 in 10 (60%) respondents indicated their college experience adequately prepared them for the real world experience, about one in four (25%) respondents also indicated that they regretted their career choice. The same survey repeated in 2013 showed: 26.7% graduates felt the college did not prepare them for today's job market, and 27.8% regretted their choice of this major and wished they had selected another career. Based on these results, it is obvious that students can benefit from an internship experience to determine if they have an interest in a particular career field, create a network of contacts, or gain college credit. However, some interns found permanent paid employment with the companies for which they interned. Many employers hire their successfully trained interns because they require minimal or no training when they begin full-time regular employment.

The Graduate Employability and Students' Orientation to Labor Market research paper by Katyal and Arora (2013) clearly demonstrates two major factors that influence the orientation of university graduates towards employability: (a) universities need to focus on designing appropriate course curriculum to meet the academic priority of the students; and (b) goal-setting and desire of accomplishments which affects the employability of graduates. The study concluded that universities should take responsibility for developing students to achieve future employment by linking academics to industry as well as "preparing their students for future job prospects through better mentoring, fulfillment of academic demands through the provision of courses per

the demand of the labor market,” and “enhancing the employability skills of the students through appropriate nurturing” (p. 1,399).

Student Preparedness for Internships

In the research study, “Determinants of Internship Effectiveness for University Students in Hong Kong” by Phoebe (2010), internship has been defined as an effective mechanism to develop university students with preliminary job knowledge and experience to enhance their employability in the competitive workforce. This study focused on the predictors of internship success that can help universities to enhance their placement program toward graduates’ employability. Phoebe identified and evaluated three individual factors and four organizational factors that determine the effectiveness of internship and explored the extent to which student intern characteristics and the employer practices contribute to their internship success. Phoebe indicated that the four organizational (employer) factors such as job challenge, effective supervision and clarity of task, and compensation were clearly associated with the effectiveness of the internship program, and concluded that the three individual factors such as self-initiative, academic preparedness and positive attitude of the intern played a major role in determining a successful internship as well.

Employer Readiness Structure for Internships

A study on the benefits and challenges faced by student interns conducted at the Zimbabwe Open University (Bukaliya, 2012), showed that the majority of the student interns preferred the internship program because it allowed them to experience expectations of the real work. However, the program faced challenges such as reluctance

of permanent employees in disclosing proper workplace information, adequate time for supervision, and the duration for internship. Some employees had qualifications lower than the interns and even regarded them as a threat to their position. The study concluded that internships are beneficial to student interns because they provided hands-on practical experience, helped students understand theories learned in the classroom and enhanced their understanding of issues relevant to their particular fields of study. However, the interns felt that one semester of internship was a short period. Bukaliya recommended that the university should be actively involved in assisting students in seeking credible employers that can enroll their interns. Also the duration for internship should be increased with proper supervision.

Verney, Holoviak, and Winter's (2009) study on "Enhancing the Reliability of Internship Evaluations," clearly demonstrated that the evaluation of student interns by their employer during the internship can be a useful method of assessing student learning as well as reviewing and revising program quality. This research indicated that universities that provide students with a well-designed and managed internship program are not only able to place its students at the time of graduation, but are also able to validate their curriculum in practical settings. If employers are satisfied with their interns, it is then assumed that the university's curriculum meets or exceeds employers' requirements. Thus, employer evaluation of the intern is important to assess the overall effectiveness of the institution's program.

The Verney et al. (2009) study also indicated that if the goals of the student, the university and its program, and the employer are aligned and assessed systematically,

then there is a better chance for the university to prepare interns that meet the demands of the employers. Their study concluded that it is not prudent to assume that the university education can solely help students gain the skills necessary to succeed in the workplace and further recommended that the internship program professionals and the faculty regularly evaluate their student learning outcomes and ensure that the program is aligned to meet employer expectations.

Internship Program Structure

In 2003, Job Outlook published findings from a survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) of human resources managers indicated that most managers agreed that their internship programs were the best source to recruit recent graduates as full-time employees. The study found that employers offered full-time jobs to nearly two-thirds of their interns and indicated that most employers want to recruit university graduates who are better prepared for real-world situations and can apply necessary practical and technical skills and the ability to adapt to change and uncertainty. It is clear from this study that education alone is not enough to prepare graduates for a competitive practical work environment.

The Job Outlook study stated that a well-designed internship program can be helpful to all parties, especially students, as they gain learning experience, and employers seeking to recruit well trained workers and concluded that internship experience be made mandatory in colleges and universities and there should be well-written documented learning objectives to provide a clear direction and targeted goals for the interns. This finding supports a need for internship program structure in postsecondary education.

Summary

This chapter examined literature that addresses the status of internship programs in higher education institutions. It described the history and chronological evolution of internships. Secondly, the theoretical foundations of experiential education in higher education were described to include internship standards, goals, structures, and processes for the program. Third, specific linkage between academic performance and career development and the impact of internships in Mass Media Arts were discussed. Lastly, the structures for student preparedness and employer readiness for internships were reviewed.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Today in most colleges and universities, employability or the potential for post-graduation employment is one of the most influencing factors in a student's choice of a college and a major area of study (Pryor, Eagan, Palucki Blake, Hurtado, Berdan, et al., 2012; NACE, 2013). The importance of academic education for development of professional and lifelong learning skills and work experience are critical to employability. Therefore, it is imperative for institutions of higher learning to ensure that its internship programs are designed to prepare interns for a successful transition to employment upon graduation and for effective management of their career thereafter.

In the real world of work, students learn from their experiences and develop competencies and skills that can enhance their employability. Employers value individuals who have prior work experience and are able to apply what they have learned. Internship programs provide a student the opportunity to transfer theoretical knowledge and skills to a practical workplace environment that can help transition to employability after graduation. Thus, an internship program addresses the needs of both the interns and the employer. It further benefits the student by allowing them to gain out of classroom professional and personal development, giving them the opportunity to explore and gain insight of their major as well as employer expectations in their field of interest.

Higher education stakeholders expect a return on investment students have made in their education on the basis of students' ability to gain employment and earn salary respective to their educational attainment. The U.S. Department of Education collects and records such data mandatorily and reports it regularly to the public. Regional and professional accrediting bodies, as well as national ranking agencies, use student achievement in terms of graduate placement in careers or further education, as a measure of university's performance and success in delivering quality academic programs and effective student learning.

Three major areas have evolved that impact student internship and postgraduation employability: (a) institutional internship definition and program structure, (b) student characteristics—quality of preparedness and employability attributes, and (c) employment industry expectations and best practices.

Definitions and Existing Theories

This case study utilized five theoretical approaches of human capital, institutional environment, experiential education, identity development, and self-efficacy theories to help design and support the research questions. These theories guided the researcher in monitoring the research process as well as in selecting and interpreting relevant data and explanations of the findings. Together, these theories gave the researcher different perspectives to look at comprehensive issues that were complicated in nature while focusing on different aspects of data collection as well as providing a conceptual framework within which to conduct the analysis.

Nationally, for sound economic growth and productivity, the interest in employability of graduate is associated with human capital. Human Capital is defined by Investopedia, LLC (2014) as,

A measure of the economic value of an employee's skill set. This measure builds on the basic production input of labor measure where all labor is thought to be equal. The concept of human capital recognizes that not all labor is equal and that the quality of employees can be improved by investing in them. The education, experience, and abilities of an employee have an economic value for employers and for the economy as a whole. (p. 1)

Therefore, education and training of workers is a major factor in determining the success of our economy, which involves future workers and their potential employers.

There are several theories that link education to the development of human capital. Human capital increases through education and experience (Sullivan & Sheffrin, 2003), and is critical to the success of an organization (Crook, Todd, Combs, Woehr, & Ketchen, 2011). According to Simkovic (2013), the role of human capital in economic development, productivity growth, and innovation has been used to validate government subsidies for education and job skills training. Recent studies on unemployment have centered on a mismatch between job-specific human capital and the needs of employers and attempts are made to improve the linkages between education and the needs of the labor market. In other words, institutions of higher education, through their academic missions, are expected to provide quality curriculum and produce graduates with key skills necessary for employability. These institutions are measured for their achievement

in meeting students' expectations and preparedness for gaining future careers and whether they are producing graduates who have the skills, competency and capability to meet the demands of the labor market.

Employability as defined by Hillage and Pollard (1998) and Crossman and Clarke (2010) is the ability of the graduate to get a job, maintain a job, or be able to obtain a new job if needed; being employable means having the qualities needed to maintain employment and progress in the workplace, and being employed means simply having a job. Therefore, employability from the institutional perspective is about preparing graduates who have the capability and competence to gain initial employment. Such requirement impacts all areas of university life including the academic programs and extracurricular services.

For academic programs, training for employability is important in terms of general education and discipline specific knowledge and skills for future employment. In order to have a successful internship program, it is essential to consider the learning environment that benefits the student. Institutional administrators must commit to this process and convince academicians to integrate employability skills and attributes into their teaching, not only in terms of what we teach, but how we teach the subject content. Curriculum development for employability should begin with a curriculum plan to incorporate statements of goals and learning outcomes. If work experience is not required of the major, typical tasks related to the workplace should be designed in the course of study. Interns' academic preparation provides the ability to apply theoretical knowledge, skills and key concept of their major or field of interest to the workplace.

Building partnerships between institutions and employers are valuable for promoting work-related learning and improving interns' possibility of future employability. The employers and the institutions should share a common set of skills and attributes required of the interns. The institutions must be aware of what employers want graduates to be able to know, think, and do in order to adapt to the workplace culture, and be able to correlate it to the educational process within the institution. Preparing students with this approach makes internship experience more realistic, productive and meaningful. This argument can be supported from the standpoint of Institutional Theory (IT) which claims that the institutional environment can strongly influence the development of formal structures within an organization, often more profoundly than market pressures.

According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), Institutional Theory deals with organizational structures that are socially constructed and are isomorphic with the institutional environment in which they exist. In doing so, organizational structures confer legitimacy, resources, and a survival advantage bounded by the assumption of a normative and regulative environment. These structures acknowledge that powerful organizations can influence the institutions that makeup its environment. Meyer and Rowan further describe how institutions affect organizations and have listed three main consequences of Institutional Theory for organizations: (a) They will espouse characteristics that are structural and are considered valid regardless of their impact on productivity, (b) They will allow external events to direct the value of their structures,

and (c) They will adapt to restructured institutional mores in order to reduce uncertainty and to promote its survival.

In other words, according to Institutional Theory, society expects postsecondary organizations to maintain legitimacy as producers of skilled workforce whether or not they have the structure or the capacity. Through this theory, it is assumed that the constituents within the organization will have the ability to make choices to influence the organizational structure and coordination of variations in the institutional structure as well as impact the overall behavior of the organization based on rationality and self-interest.

For college students, an internship experience is a valuable component of student learning enabling them to supplement their academic study with practical experience under conditions conducive to educational development (NACE, 2011). Therefore, personal qualities and willingness to learn are important in the gaining of subject matter knowledge and the development of skills.

Since co-curricular activities are closely connected to classroom learning, the theoretical framework for this study is supported by Chickering's Theory on Identity Development. According to Chickering and Reisser (1993), of the seven vectors (tasks) that students in higher education must go through in the process of identity development, the very first one is to develop competence in the three domains of learning: (a) intellectual (ability to understand, analyze and synthesize), (b) manual skills (physical ability accomplish tasks), and (c) interpersonal (ability to work and establish relationships

with others). These competencies come from the knowledge that a student is capable of achieving goals and cope with challenging environmental circumstances.

Self-efficacy also plays an important role in a student's choice of degree program, career choice and personal development, and is thus significant for his/her employability. According to Bandura (1986), self-efficacy beliefs are self-regulatory and provide basis for human motivation. People motivate themselves and make life choices for well-being and personal achievement when they believe their actions can yield their desired outcomes. When faced with difficulties and adverse situations, people tend to have little or no incentive to perform tasks in which they do not feel knowledgeable and confident Bandura (1986). Thus, self-efficacy theory influences human functioning and supports the idea that individuals, based on their experiences, adjust the way in which they think and behave through self-reflection, self-belief, and self-evaluation (Bandura, 1986). Interns' disposition, positive attitude, and self-initiative by taking interest in the workplace they serve, volunteering for assignments, enhancing interpersonal relationships with coworkers, and learning from constructive feedback can make their experience realistic and satisfactory. The objective here is to help interns improve their capacity to understand what and how they are learning, and to review, plan and take responsibility for the outcome of their own learning that can lead to potential employment in the future.

There are several theories on personal development and group dynamics that can help interns meet the primary needs and expectations of the workplace and that of employers. According to Garvey and Vorsteg (1995), there are key aspects and roles

vital to internship experiences that should be closely examined. Interns are exposed to a lot of information as they work to meet employers' demands ranging from simple to complex tasks. To understand and process this new environment can be challenging to interns' mental and emotional capability. This argument is supported through Experiential Learning Theory, often referred as learning by performing, and is best known in education as a participative, interactive, and applied practice that can effectively be demonstrated and measured. Kolb (1984a) describes experiential learning as a process in which knowledge is shaped through experience. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory is based on a four factor cycle: (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation. Thus, Experiential Learning Theory draws on experience as a critical process of adult learning and is applied to cognitive process used by college interns as they attempt to combine theory with practice to fulfill requirements of internship.

Garvey and Vorsteg (1995) offer a stage theory approach which involves four integrated developmental phases of human behavior students go through as they transit from theory to practice:

1. **Exhilaration**—students are excited about trying a new approach to their learning and have very little knowledge about it;
2. **Rejection**—students will want to have leadership opportunities in which they could demonstrate their academic development. In this case, the interns may have to reject or modify their previously held belief of efficacy of experiential learning;

3. **Integration**—students integrate theory into practice and realize what background information is needed to perform tasks. This stage, in the form of reflective practice, can provide a critical connect for faculty to improve classroom activities; and
4. **Transformation**—students in this stage enter in a new set of experiences, beliefs and methods which they transfer from past theories to current practices and are often excited by their ability to form a clear picture of what they have accomplished. (pp. 300-303)

This theory clearly indicates that educators must help create out-of-classroom opportunities and support for interns to positively impact the institution with which they are connected.

In summary, in order to propose and validate the causes, effects and influences of the research, this qualitative case study utilized five theoretical approaches drawn from organizational, humanities, social, and behavioral sciences domains: Human Capital Theory, Institutional Theory, Experiential Education Theory, Identity Development Theory, and Self-efficacy Theory. These theories were applied to help the researcher understand the conceptual complexity of the research questions: how institutional internship programs were structured, why interns behaved in certain ways, and how employers were organized for interns. Confluence of these theories ultimately allowed the researcher to focus on the research process, collect and interpret data, and inform findings of the study.

The following theoretical framework looked at the interns' postgraduation employability as a dependent variable, and the independent variables were institutional internship program structure; alignment of academic programs and co-curriculum requirements; student characteristics (Identity Development) and skill development opportunities; employment industry internship program structure; and employer institution relationship.

Definition of Variables

Dependent Variable

Intern postgraduation employability: Internship experience enhances career skills, career focus and career-related benefits for interns resulting in improved employment opportunities and early transition to job market upon graduation. According to Lees (2002), there are several definitions of employability. Hillage and Pollard (1988) and Crossman and Clarke (2010) have indicated that employability is about ability of the graduate to get a job, maintain a job, or be able to obtain a new job if needed. From the perspective of higher education institutions and for the purpose of this study, employability is defined as the graduate's preparedness and ability to initially get a job or be able to obtain a new job if needed. This viewpoint impacts all areas of student life on campus including in classroom and out of classroom activities.

Independent Variables

Internship program structure—program definition, design, learning goals, and staffing support

Alignment of academic programs and curriculum requirements—

(theoretical) to co-curricular student experiences (practical hand-on)

Student characteristics and skills development—classroom to workplace skills

transfer

Employment industry internship program structure—definition, training

program need, length, compensation, supervision, mentoring, evaluation, and feedback

Employer-institution relationship—partnerships and alliances; credibility and

workforce demands

Definition of Other Terms

Co-curricular: Nonacademic out of classroom activities in which students

participate throughout their matriculation at a postsecondary institution. These activities are closely connected to classroom learning (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

Curricular: In classroom activities related to academic courses of study provided

by a postsecondary educational institution.

Employability: The ability of the graduate to get a job, maintain a job, or be

able to obtain a new job if needed. Employable means having the qualities needed to maintain employment and progress in the workplace and employed means simply having a job (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Crossman & Clarke, 2010).

Experiential Learning Theory: The processes of learning personal development,

work and education. People learn from experiences as a critical process of adult learning (Kolb, 1984a).

Human Capital Theory: Defined as “a measure of the economic value of an employee's skill set . . . the education, experience and abilities of an employee have an economic value for employers and for the economy as a whole” (Investopedia, LLC, 2014, p. 1).

Identity Development Theory: The process of self-development through competence in intellectual knowledge, manual skills, and interpersonal abilities (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

Institutional Theory: Organizational structures that are socially constructed and are isomorphic with the institutional environment in which they exist (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Society expects postsecondary organizations to maintain legitimacy as producers of skilled workforce whether or not they have the structure or the capacity.

Intern: An undergraduate college student participating in a one-time work or service experience related to his or her major or career goal.

Internship: A form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; internships give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent (NACE, 2011).

Self-efficacy: Self-efficacy beliefs are self-regulatory and provide basis for human motivation (Bandura, 1986). It influences human functioning and supports the

idea that individuals, based on their experiences, adjust the way in which they think and behave through self-reflection, self-belief, and self-evaluation.

Figure 2 shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, as well as the correlation between the variables and the five theories explored to support the research questions.

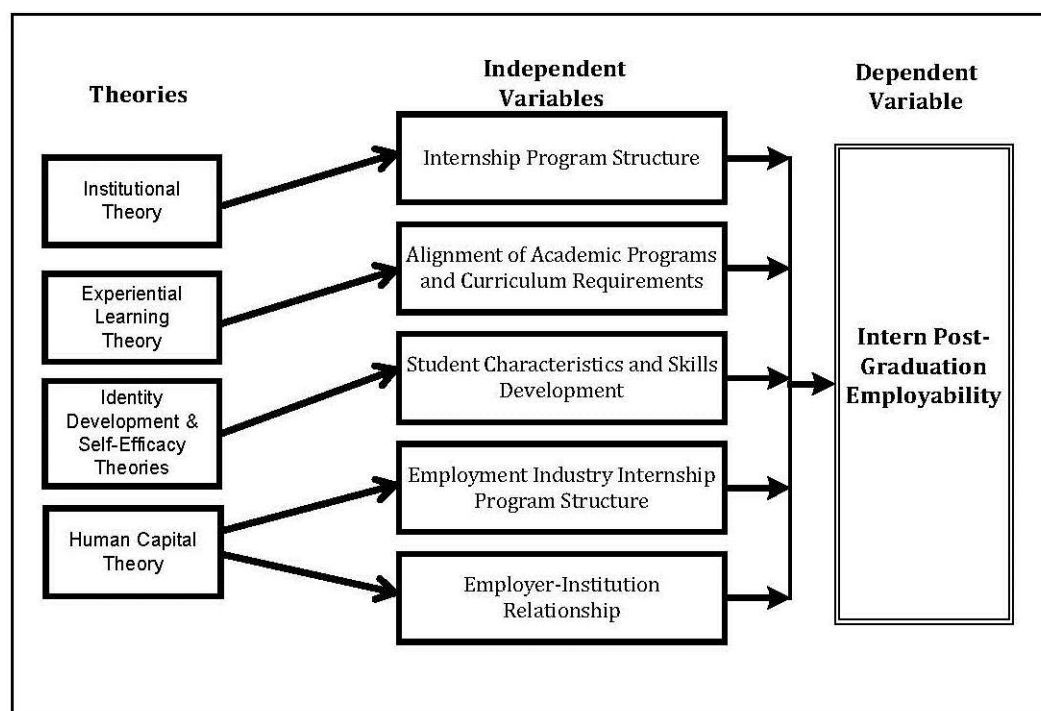


Figure 2. Relationship of the Variables

Limitations of the Study

The research for this study was limited by a number of factors, including:

1. The study was based on a single sample institution and therefore may not apply to all institutions of higher learning.
2. The study only included interns in one undergraduate academic area—Mass Media Arts; therefore, the study may not be representative of other academic

internship programs managed by the institution or any other academic departments.

3. The quantitative data (student survey) only collected participant data sample specific to the Mass Media Arts Department. The data included the most recent class of internship participants and completers in the Mass Media Arts Department who were still enrolled at the institution. The data did not include previous interns who graduated and have been employed based on their internship experience.
4. The quantitative data (student survey) results used for this study were based on nine participants (out of 50 invited) who responded to the questionnaire.
5. The study was based on student self-reported surveys and interviews with institutional administrators, career services, and Mass Media Arts faculty, each of whom interpreted his or her opinion and experiences in different contexts as well as scales.
6. The qualitative interviews included only participants (administrators and faculty) engaged with the Departments of Career Services and Mass Media Arts-related internship activity. Their views, perceptions or opinions might not reflect the entire institutional perspective and that of other professionals in the field.
7. This study strictly focused on the institutional alignment of the structures of the institution (curricular, co-curricular support, and student achievement of out of class) in the Mass Media Arts program only. It did not consider other

relational external factors that can impact the competitiveness of internal programming at the institution, especially in the areas of availability of resources, organizational environment (climate, politics, and marketability), and quality of faculty, staff, and students.

8. The researcher is familiar with the curricular and co-curricular operations of the case study institution. Additionally, the site selection was convenient to the researcher. Postsecondary institutions other than the case study institution have internship programs and could have been equally well-suited for consideration.

Summary

This chapter presented the theoretical framework related to student internship and postgraduation employability and includes the definition of existing theories. Five theoretical approaches of human capital, institutional environment, experiential education, identity development, and self-efficacy theories were discussed to guide, design, and support the research questions as well as provide a conceptual framework within which to collect data and conduct the analysis.

Secondly, intern postgraduation employability was discussed as the dependent variable and five independent variables: internship program structure; alignment of academic and co-curricular programs for student experiences; student characteristics and skills development; employer program structure; and employer-institution relationship were identified. The relationship of the dependent and independent variables was

established to support the study. Finally, this chapter included definitions of other terms and provided a list of limitations to the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the available literature reviews on this topic, this research used the case study method to understand which undergraduate internship program structures were most effective in enhancing postgraduate employability of students in Mass Media Arts at an institution of higher education. According to Creswell (2007), case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (for example, observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes. A case study can be considered a methodology, strategy of inquiry, or research strategy. It involves the study of an issue through specific cases. In case studies emphasis is placed on the exploration and description.

This research employed quantitative and qualitative case study approach for gathering, processing and analyzing data to cross-tabulate the internship program structure, student preparedness, and employer expectations of interns. Quantitative data “[were] used to describe current conditions, investigate relationships, and study cause-effect phenomena” (Gay & Airasian, 2000. p. 11). Quantitative data also “employed strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys and [collected] data on

predetermined instruments that yield statistical data” (Creswell, 2003, p. 18). The qualitative approach

was multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 2)

Therefore, the researcher chose a concurrent mixed-methods case study to allow for detailed data collection from multiple sources of information with the possibility of gaining considerable in-depth knowledge on the issue (Creswell, 2008).

Sampling Method (Procedures)

In qualitative research where to begin the initial sampling and selection of sample has a profound effect on the ultimate quality of the study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the research design needs to remain appropriately open as well as flexible to permit exploration of the inquiry under study.

This study employed quota sampling and expert sampling which are considered to be a type of selective and purposeful sampling to administer survey and conduct semistructured interviews. Patton (2008) defined purposeful inquiry as focused inquiry. According to Patton (1990), in qualitative research all types of sampling may be covered under the broad term of “purposeful sampling” and that “qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases, selected purposefully” (p. 169). Patton further stated the following:

Logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling. (p. 169)

Therefore, selective sampling may be considered purposeful where cases are selected intentionally to fit the study. According to Sandelowski, Holditch-Davis, and Harris (1992), selective sampling “refers to a decision made prior to beginning a study to sample subjects according to a preconceived, but reasonable initial set of criteria” (p. 302). In addition, Sandelowski (1995) viewed all sampling in qualitative research as purposeful where “researchers wanting maximum variation in their sample must decide what kind(s) of variation they want to maximize and when to maximize each kind” (p. 181). Examples of variations may include individual-related categories such as gender, age, profession, position, status, role or function in organization. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) posit that the researcher designing the study selects individuals relevant to the focus of the research and decides on a number of individuals with which characteristics to include as participants. The selection criteria allow the researcher to select individuals who would most likely have experience, know about, or insights into the research topic. Glaser (1978) also suggested “selective sampling” as a frequently used sampling method in qualitative analysis (p. 37) and acknowledged that during the initial stages of a study, researchers will do the following:

Go to the groups which they believe will maximize the possibilities of obtaining data and leads for more data on their question. They will also begin by talking to the most knowledgeable people to get a line on relevancies and leads to track down more data and where and how to locate oneself for a rich supply of data.

(p. 45)

Sample Selection

Each participant (interns, administrators and faculty) was purposefully selected from the case study institution. According to Merriam (1998), “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator want to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61).

Creswell (2007) defines purposeful sampling as “[the] inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem” (p. 125). For quantitative data, students who participated and completed internship program and were still enrolled at the case study institution were selected, and for qualitative data participants whose primary role and responsibility was in the area of student internship activities were selected. For this study, all participants involved in internship related activities were engaged in answering the research questions due to their past or present experience in internship program activities.

Morse (1991) has described four types of sampling used in qualitative research: (a) the purposeful sample, (b) the nominated sample, (c) the volunteer sample, and (d) the sample that consists of the total population. Morse states that “when obtaining a purposeful (or theoretical) sample, the researcher selects a participant according to the

needs of the study” (p. 129). She further proceeds to describe this type of sampling as the researcher initially choosing to do the following:

Interview informants with a broad general knowledge of the topic or those who have undergone the experience and whose experience is considered typical. Then as the study progresses the description is expanded with more specific information and participants with that particular knowledge are deliberately sought. Finally, informants with atypical experiences are sought so that the entire range of experiences and the breadth of the concept or phenomena may be understood. (p. 129)

Sample Size

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), sample size in the majority of qualitative studies should generally follow the concept of saturation during data collection. The research should use saturation as a guiding principle when there is no further new data that adds to the data collected on the issue under study, despite other factors that may impact the sample size in qualitative study. Jette, Grover, and Keck (2003) have indicated that expertise in the chosen topic can reduce the number of participants needed in a study. Charmaz (2006) also posits that a small study with “modest claims” (p. 114) might achieve saturation faster than a study that spans across several disciplines and further suggests that “25 (participants are) adequate for smaller projects” (p. 114), and according to Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam (2003), qualitative samples often “lie under 50” (p. 84).

The study of a Mass Media Arts undergraduate internship program focused on three primary participants: (a) the institution that offers internship program, (b) the

students who participate in experiential learning, and (c) the partner internship employers. Since the purpose of this research was to examine the institutional internship program structure effectiveness, the following three data collection strategies were used for this case study.

Survey/Questionnaire

Surveys are the most popular form of collecting quantitative data, particularly when gathering information from large sample sizes, where standardization is critical. According to Creswell (2003), quantitative approach “employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collects data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data” (p. 18).

In quantitative research, questionnaires are a valuable method of collecting a wide range of data and are designed to conduct cross-sectional and longitudinal studies or structured interviews in order to generalize data collected from a sample of population (Babbie, 1990). Cross-sectional surveys are typically designed to gather data from target population and are carried out at one point in time to provide the researcher with a view of what is happening in that study sample at that particular time. For the purposes of this research, a cross-sectional survey of Student Internship Experience was developed and administered to Mass Media Arts students who recently completed an internship and were enrolled at the institution (see Appendix A).

This study sample consisted of a single campus postsecondary institution offering an undergraduate Mass Media Arts degree program that included internship experience as part of their curriculum and provided career placement services through the institution in

the state of Georgia. A survey/questionnaire was designed and administered to internship completers to collect data from the case study institution. The researcher constructed a “close-ended” survey in which the participants were asked to select from a range of predetermined answers. Responses employed some form of Likert scale rating (e.g., rate a given statement from 1 to 5 on a scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”) and provided statements to respond (i.e., rate the statements based on your experience at this institution related to your most recent internship), or categories participants can choose from (e.g., before beginning internship, which of the following was made available to you and by whom). The last question on the survey was “open ended,” for participants to answer in a free flowing narrative form.

The researcher conducted a preliminary survey at the institution to test the instrument design, wording, and applicability prior to administering the instrument to internship participants. In addition to the structured questions used for preliminary testing, the instrument included “OTHER” as an option for providing information that may be relevant and applicable to the selected variables. The final survey instrument was distributed electronically to the most recent class of 50 internship completers in the Mass Media Arts Department via email attachment for web-based online data collection system. For convenience and a timely response rate, the survey instrument was administered online as a link attached to the participant email. The list of participants and email addresses were provided by the department chair of Mass Media Arts and the Office of Institutional Research at the study institution. The researcher used Snap Survey Software and its internal analysis tool to collect data and put it directly into an Internet-

based online database. The time and steps between data collection and analysis was shortened, and appropriate checks were applied to keep out-of-range responses from being entered.

All participants were given instructions before completing the questionnaire including the nature of study and time required to complete the survey. To encourage optimum participation, a personalized cover letter was attached to the survey instrument. According to *Total Design Method* (Dillman, 1978), a response time period of 15 days was allotted for survey responses which included one reminder sent after one week of distribution of the survey. Because of the fact that online surveys have a lower response rate than other modes of survey distribution, the researcher asked the Mass Media Arts Department chair to assist by informing students to respond.

Preliminary Survey Focus Group

Focus groups consist of 8 to 12 people who share similar characteristics relevant to the required research (Krueger & Casey, 2008; McDaniel & Gates, 2002). The intent to utilize a focus group for this study was to generate insights that were unlikely to emerge under other circumstances. This technique allowed the researcher firsthand insights into the respondents' experience, expectations, behaviors, and attitudes toward internship experience. A specific application of the focus group method in the study was to pretest the instrument, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and improve the research instrument. Therefore, a small preliminary study was performed to construct, revise and evaluate the final study instrument and sensitivity of the measurement tool used to establish research tool's internal validity and reliability. The survey tool was tested

through a randomly selected group of 10 students who had recently completed an internship program in the Mass Media Arts discipline and were still enrolled at the case study institution. This process was utilized to obtain content and internal validity of the questionnaire to finalize the overall design of the study instrument at the institution. The preliminary survey group was invited to complete the survey in order to identify if any improvements were needed before finalizing the survey for administration. Only one intern out of 10 participated in the preliminary survey. This response was complete therefore, it was implied that no further changes were necessary. The survey instrument was reviewed by the director of assessment and the director of institutional research. The instrument was also reviewed, modified, and approved for the study by the dissertation chairperson as well as the advisor of the dissertation committee.

According to Wainer and Braun (1998), validity in quantitative research is “construct validity” in which there is interplay between construct and data. The construct is the initial theoretical concept or hypothetical question that determines which data should be collected and how it should be collected. Quantitative researchers therefore, usually test the study instruments to validate whether the means of measurement are accurate and reliable as well as whether they will actually measure what the researcher is proposing to measure.

The use of the preliminary survey focus group’s input was to minimize sampling error, nonresponse error, and sampling bias as well as to contribute substantively to the validity of the data derived from survey analysis. The researcher obtained informed consent from the study participants to protect the ethical rights of the participants.

Interviews

Semistructured interviews are considered a reliable qualitative method of inquiry that combines a predetermined set of open questions (questions that prompt discussion) with the opportunity for the researcher to explore particular themes or responses further. These interviews are conducted on the basis of a loose structure (topic guide) made up of open-ended questions defining the area to be explored. They have a flexible and fluid structure, and contain a structured sequence of questions to be asked in the same way of all interviewees. According to Barriball and While (1994), semistructured interviews as a means of data collection, “are well suited for the exploration of the perceptions and opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues and enable probing for more information and clarification of answers” (p. 330).

For this study, a semistructured interview method was selected to allow the researcher to prepare questions ahead of time and provide participants the freedom to express their views in their own terms, “in order to explore participants’ opinions, clarify interesting and relevant issues, elicit complete information and explore sensitive topics within each interview” (Barriball & While, 1994: p. 334). Because these interviews contained open-ended questions and discussions may diverge from the interview guide, the researcher recorded each interview and later transcribed them for analysis.

Semistructured interviews are a very desirable strategy in qualitative data collection because it is conducted with individuals or a small group of individuals and it encourages free and open responses to capture participants’ perceptions in their own

words (Barriball & While, 1994). This approach allowed the researcher to present a meaningful experience from the participant's perspective.

As part of the qualitative data collection, semistructured interviews with six administrative professionals (two senior administrators, two career service staff members, one department chair/coordinator, and one school dean) within the departments of Career Services, Mass Media Arts, and the School of Arts and Sciences who were familiar with the institution and department level internship program were conducted. The interview questions were scripted and recorded for transcription. Each interview was transcribed with additional notes for clarification and interpretation. An interview protocol and questionnaire designed by the researcher was used to collect data from administrative and faculty subject matter experts (see Appendix B).

Patton (1990) suggests that interviews are useful particularly for answering questions such as:

- What does the program look and feel like to the participants? To other stakeholders?
- What do stakeholders know about the program?
- What thoughts do stakeholders knowledgeable about the program have concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes?
- What are participants' and stakeholders' expectations?
- What features of the program are most salient to the participants?
- What changes do participants perceive in themselves as a result of their involvement in the program?

In addition to the preliminary survey of focus group and survey of interns as well as semistructured interviews with the administrative and academic professionals, this research study design also included a document analysis of case study institution and successful internship program models at other colleges and universities, and national professional organizations and agencies based on best industry practices.

Document Reviews and Studies

Information in existing records are often found in document format and provide insights into a setting and/or group of people that cannot be observed or noted in any other way. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), a document is material that is recorded or written and is not prepared at the request of the inquirer. Guba and Lincoln (1981) identified two major categories of documents: public records and personal documents. They further indicated that public records are materials created and kept for the purpose of confirming an event or providing an accounting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, public records can be collected from external or internal sources for this case study. Examples of external records are institutional program reports, guides, and policy manuals that can assist the researcher in gathering information about the program and relevant industry trends and best practices. Such materials can be helpful in better understanding the internship program, its participants, partner employers as well as making comparisons among the three parties. Information from existing records and documents can also be useful in developing the survey instrument and interview questions or making comparisons of institutional and employer program descriptions, policies, practices, and activities.

The data collection process for this study included a variety of review documents including email communications, samples of program materials such as, guidebooks, operating manuals, brochures, pamphlets, fliers, newsletters, course catalogs and syllabus obtained or provided by the institution and employers. Also, data from previous research documents were collected.

Most postsecondary institutions have a dedicated career services center as a part of their student support requirements, these documents were mainly collected to gain insight into how each of the institutions have designed their structure for such service. These documents were also important to compare with the requirements of employer internship programs developed for their specific organization. The result from this finding was to determine how well the institutional curricular/co-curricular departments and employers are aligned in addressing the process of experiential learning.

It is expected that the analytical review of sample documents will vary depending on the institution and the need of the employer. Therefore, each document was systematically examined using an established matrix and criteria to identify both the differences and similarities between the institution's internship structure and the employer's readiness structure. Also, the presence of all common approaches applicable to intern preparedness was noted from the document reviews.

Successful Internship Program Models

In order to determine a successful internship program, a review of a number of similar program models based on best industry practices was conducted. Following is a description of some of these programs.

The Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) Guide to Organizing an Internship Program

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) was founded in 1948. The SHRM Guide to Organizing an Internship Program was a model program developed by Letty Kluttz, Knowledge Manager and Chuck Salvetti, Manager of Student Programs at SHRM in 2004. The SHRM association, located in Alexandria, Virginia, is devoted to serving human resource management leaders of tomorrow by providing the tools necessary to educate and advance the HR profession, building strong and active student chapters, and providing career guidance (Kluttz & Salvetti, 2004). The guidebook was prepared to assist professionals in creating new internship opportunities as well as improving the existing programs for the mutual benefit of all participants: the university, the students, and the employer. This guide outlined the steps necessary to create a successful work related internship program; provided valuable information for both the internship seeker and the internship provider and listed the responsibilities and the benefits for all participants. The information in this guidebook was used as a model to compare with the case study institution's internship program.

The SHRM model was useful for this project because it helps prepare students to work effectively in the business world after graduation, especially for gaining real-world experience. It also helps the participants to make more informed career choices, which may result in higher job satisfaction and higher productivity. A greater number of internship opportunities will result in better placement of graduates and a higher level of experience and professionalism among these entry-level workers.

Quality Internship Program Guide

Starting and Maintaining A Quality Internship Program was another model guide compiled and edited by Michael True (n.d.), Director of the Internship Center at Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. This guide was designed for institutions to create a successful internship program for hiring interns and for maintaining a lasting internship program. A similar *Guide to Internships* (n.d.) was created by the University of Longwood, Farmville, Virginia. It was to assist educational institutions and their partnering organizations in creating internship programs. These guides have been used as models by many colleges and universities in establishing or improving internship programs at sponsoring organizations in order to provide substantive work experiences that can support students' academic and career goals. Their guides to provide resources for professional practitioners in the fields of cooperative education and internship program management are modeled by best practices in the industry and are compiled based on standards established by renowned associations such as, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), and the Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA).

The missions of these associations are carried out through an expanding number of training activities, annual national conferences, and the support and encouragement for on-going research and publications. The researcher also used Massachusetts Community Colleges' (2011) Handbook for Practitioners and Administrators on Experiential

Education: Internship and Cooperative Education developed by 15 Community Colleges of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Indiana INTERNnet Program

The Indiana Employer's Guide to Internships titled, "Intern Today, Employee Tomorrow," represents the internship triangle of employers, students and institutional career services professionals. The Indiana INTERNnet was formed in 2001 by the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, the state's largest business advocacy organization as a result of the state's "brain drain" issue. The mission of the program is to increase the quantity and quality of experiential learning in the state of Indiana in order to retain top talent. Their goal is to help create or expand high-quality experiential opportunities within the state of Indiana. Their philosophy is that internships are valuable for learning institutions and they establish a collaborative work environment between a school and community, resulting in enhanced curriculum and increased student retention. Overall, internships are mutually beneficial to employers, students and schools. Thus, their program, initiated and operated in partnership with the University of Indianapolis, provides a free internship-matching service linking employers, students, high schools, colleges and universities. It maintains a dynamic, searchable database, matching and reporting system coupled with personal assistance and includes a toll-free hotline to answer questions and provide internship guidance and resource materials.

These internship program models have featured content that the researcher believed were most appropriate in the design approach for a model internship program.

Research Design and Methodology

In this research, one undergraduate academic department offering a Mass Media Arts degree program at a single campus institution of higher education was selected as a case study using a concurrent, nested mixed-methods model to collect both qualitative and quantitative data while emphasizing mainly on qualitative data (see Figure 3). According to Plano Clark and Creswell (2007), using this methodology helps researchers gain “broader perspectives from using the different methods as opposed to using the predominant method alone” (p. 184).

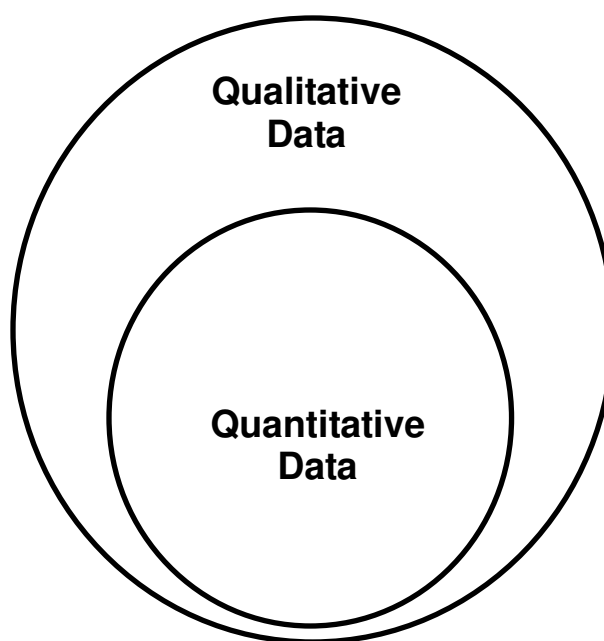


Figure 3. Concurrent Nested Mixed Method

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), when performing studies linking qualitative and quantitative methods have the advantage of showing the validity and usefulness of findings. Therefore, a carefully designed mixed-method approach of quantitative and qualitative data collection to study this case increased both the validity

and the reliability of data collection as well as yielded benefits in triangulating all approaches to collect data and in honing the researcher's understanding of findings. A typical nested mixed-method data collection started out with a survey of a preliminary focus group, alerting the researcher to issues that should be explored in the final design of the instrument, followed by the survey of internship participants, and semistructured interviews of administrative and academic professionals and document reviews at the case study institution.

Figure 4 shows a carefully designed mixed-method design that benefitted the researcher to conceptualize the validity and triangulation of all data collection approaches for comparative analysis and interpret action of findings.

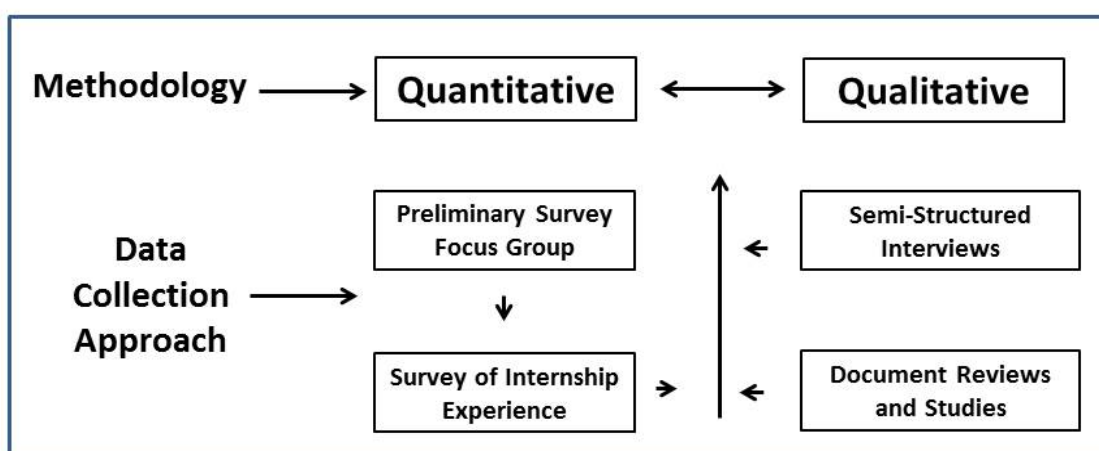


Figure 4. Mixed-Method Design

Quantitative data (a survey) were collected from a sample of 50 most recent interns in the Mass Media Arts Department at the institution who answered RQ1 and RQ5. This group of subjects was exposed to the variable under study. Qualitative data

(semistructured interviews and document reviews) were collected from the institution's administrators of the internship program in the Career Services Center, Mass Media Arts Department chair, and dean of the School of Arts and Sciences to address RQ1 and RQ8. Semistructured interviews included six administrative and academic professionals (two senior administrators, two career service staff members, one department chair/coordinator, and one school dean) familiar with the institution and the department level internship program. This method helped explain how co-curricular activities of career services as the administrative unit of the institution, supports the achievement of the Mass Media Arts Department student internship objectives. Furthermore, this study helped identify emergent themes from academic and administrative interviews and supported them with the findings from the intern survey results.

Case Study Methodology

This researcher selected the Mass Media Arts undergraduate program at one private institution in the state of Georgia as a case study to research which undergraduate student internship program structures are most effective as an academic component of experiential learning that can benefit the overall success of the internship programs. This study investigated the collaborative relationships between the institutional curricular (academic) and co-curricular (career services) programs, participating interns, and industry employers. Creswell (2007) has implicated that "a case study is a good approach when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases for a comparison of several cases" (p. 74). Using one institution's academic program as a case study allowed the researcher to review its

institution-specific internship program and its academic program-specific documents. Creswell (2007) also indicates that a case study “analyzes data through description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes” (p. 79). The analysis of internship programs in higher education resulted in several overlapping themes requiring further analysis for interpretation. This case study method helped make connections with several emergent themes in relation to institutional structure and its internship program.

Data Collection Procedures by Research Question

Details of the data collection procedures used in this study were specific to each research question addressed for this research. Table 2 and Table 3 detail the use of data collection instruments for each of the independent variables.

Table 2

Alignment of Independent Variables to Research Questions

	Independent Variables	Research Questions (RQ)
1	Internship Program Structure	
2	Alignment of Academic Programs and Curriculum Requirements	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, RQ4
3	Student Characteristics and Skill Development	RQ5, RQ6, RQ7
4	Employment Industry Internship Program Structure	
5	Employer-Institution Relationships	RQ8, RQ9, RQ10

Table 3

Alignment of Research Questions to Research Instruments

Research Questions (RQ)	Research Instruments		
	Student Survey Questions	Administrative Interview Questions	Document Review/ Analysis
RQ1		1	X
RQ2	1-15; 19-21; 22.2-22.7	2, 7	
RQ3	22.1; 22.11	3	
RQ4	17-18; 22.8-22.10; 24.5-24.8; 24.11; 25	4	
RQ5		4	
RQ6	24.3-24.4	4	
RQ7	24.1-24.2; 24.9-24.10	-	
RQ8		5	X
RQ9	23.1-23.2; 23.4-23.9; 23.11	5	X
RQ10	16; 23.3; 23.10	6	X

Quantitative Data Collection Procedures

This study employed a survey instrument to assess student intern perceptions related to their participation in the internship program and whether their hands-on experience has improved their ability to gain postgraduation employment. In survey research, as Leedy and Ormond (2005) indicate, “the ultimate goal is to learn about a large population by surveying a sample of that population” (p. 183). A student survey was distributed to student interns who have most recently participated in the Mass Media

Arts Department's internship program to solicit their input relating to their experience and how such experience has affected their achievement in gaining a job. A sample of 50 most recent student interns was selected for the survey based on their previous participation and completion in one or more internship placement related to their major and who were currently enrolled at the institution. A list of participants was provided by the Mass Media Arts Department chair and email addresses were provided by the Office of Institutional Research at the case study institution.

Qualitative Data Collection Procedures

Interviews (semistructured) to assess how well the institution's administrators and the department faculty align internship structure as curricular and co-curricular with employer readiness structure were conducted with the same six administrative and academic professionals (two senior administrators, two career service staff members, one department chair/coordinator, and one school dean) familiar with the institution and department level internship program.

RQ1: What are the understandings of the institution's professionals regarding the expectations and success of the internship program activities?

RQ2: How does the internship program structure impact the success of experiential education?

RQ3: How are academic programs designed to prepare interns for on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?

RQ4: How does the evaluation of the internship program impact the overall program structure?

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied in collecting data for these questions. In order to address the first research question regarding the impact of the internship structure at the research institution, a semistructured interview process was used to interview institutional and departmental administrators and faculty. All participants were interviewed using the same questions with a provision for individual follow-up if needed.

Six administrative and academic professionals (two senior administrators, two career service staff members, one department chair/coordinator, and one school dean) familiar with the institution and department level internship program activities were asked to participate in the study. A timetable of interview administration and completion by each participant was created.

The institution's administrators and Mass Media Arts Department interns were asked questions related to the internship activities offered in support of the student's academic requirements. Questions were designed to determine alignment between co-curricular internship program structure and opportunity in academic learning to improve post-graduation employability. Classification and coding techniques, and qualitative data analysis were used to analyze the findings.

RQ5: What curricular and co-curricular support processes are designed to prepare interns for successful placement?

RQ6: How does student preparation impact their on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?

RQ7: How does student perception of their level of preparedness for internship impact their performance/experience?

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to answer these questions. The intern survey was administered to Mass Media Arts internship completers to solicit their expectation of the institution's departmental and co-curricular activities. All participants were given instructions before completing the questionnaire including the nature of study and time required to complete the survey. For convenience and a timely response rate, the intern survey instrument was administered online as a link attached to the participant email provided by the Office of Institutional Research. The researcher used web-based SNAP survey software internal analysis tool so that the data collected was put directly into an internet-based online database, the time and steps between data collection and analysis was shortened, and appropriate checks were applied to keep out-of-range responses from being entered. For comparison purposes, aggregate data analysis was performed to generate descriptive statistics in the format of mean and average scores.

Semistructured interviews to assess perceptions related to internship activities were conducted with the same six administrative and academic professionals (two senior administrators, two career service staff members, one department chair/coordinator, and one school dean) familiar with the institution and department level internship program activities.

RQ8: What internship program structure does the employer have for appropriate intern placement?

RQ9: How does the employers' level of readiness for interns meet the institution's expectations?

RQ10: How does the relationship between the institution and the potential employer impact interns' placement rates and their employment

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were be used to answer these questions.

Semistructured interviews to assess how well the institution's administrators and the department faculty align internship structure as curricular and co-curricular with employer readiness structure were conducted with the same six administrative and academic professionals (two senior administrators, two career service staff members, one department chair/coordinator, and one school dean) familiar with the institution and department level internship program.

Data Analysis Strategies

In analyzing the data for this research, mixed-method data analysis strategies were applied to investigate and understand which specific characteristics are related to the participant responses in the study. According to Caracelli and Greene (1993), a mixed-method approach includes at least one quantitative design to collect numbers and one qualitative design to collect words. Thus, a mixed method involves some form of integration where neither type of approach is typically linked to a particular inquiry standard. In applied research it is a common practice to code qualitative data numerically for statistical analysis in order to single out extreme or outstanding issues for further analysis. In addition, mixed-method approaches are noted for their sequential character, where the results of the first method are used to inform the development of the second

including instrumentation, sampling, and administration decisions. The integrative potential of incorporating qualitative data into quantitative analyses and vice versa around different data sets added depth of understanding to this study and aided in highlighting the convergence of emergent themes from each of the data collection framework.

The qualitative research triangulation technique was applied to ensure that an account was rich, robust, comprehensive and well-developed. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the triangulation approach is used to confirm findings and as a test for validation or verification by using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce deeper understanding. It also assumes that a weakness in one method will be compensated for by another method, and that it is always possible to make sense between different accounts. Therefore, this study included three sources of data collection for analysis as outlined in Figure 5.

The conceptual overlap of the data collection method was useful in guiding each data analysis strategies to support the study's triangulation design. Although the underlying logic of triangulation requires independence of methods through data analysis and interpretation, the integration of different data sets during data analysis remained intentional. The use of such strategies significantly amplified the results of this study. First, all qualitative data from the interview and document analysis were rated and coded along with the quantitative (statistical) data from the survey of interns.

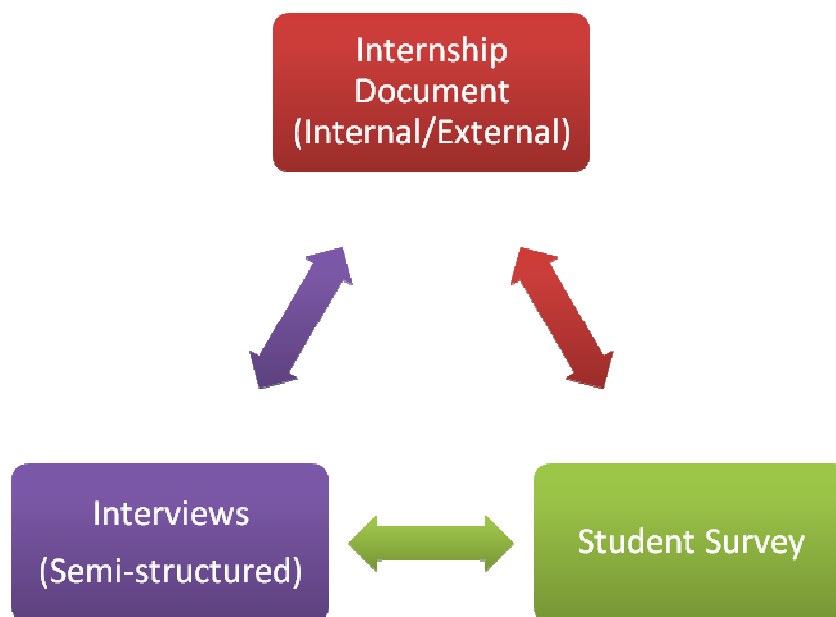


Figure 5. Triangulation of Data

Through triangulation from three different sources—transcribed interviews of the administrators in the Career Services Center and faculty in Mass Media Arts Department, the document review and analysis of best industry practices in internship programs, and an internship experience survey of Mass Media Arts students—a database was compiled for this study. Secondly, the words or phrases that had similarities or repeated throughout the interview transcripts of open ended questions were labeled and coded into related categories.

Site Selection

The Mass Media Arts program selected at the case study institution for research is due to its high enrollment pattern over the last several years. The department is preparing to apply for ACEJMC accreditation which advocates and encourages the program to

include up to six credits of major related internship or other professional experiences. At the institutional level, there is a department of career services design to assist with student placement in various experiential learning opportunities to aid in hands on learning and improving employability after graduation. At the state level, the institution is well known for its history and past achievements, and is located in close proximity of the top media and entertainment business hub. At the national level, the program has been recognized by the chapter of Honor Society. The case study institution is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award undergraduate and graduate degrees, and is recognized by the federal department of education.

Participants

Fifty Mass Media Arts students who had most recently participated and completed one or more major related internships and were enrolled at the institution were invited to participate in the survey. Prior to survey administration, a list of the most recent Mass Media Arts interns was obtained from the department chair and their contact email addresses were provided by the Office of Institutional Research at the case study institution. Nine out of 50 (18%) students responded to the survey. The first 15 questions on the survey were related to participants' demographic and academic information to acknowledge participants as a homogeneous group and to create a profile of participants in order to comprise a set of values for a set of predetermined indicators. This profile was aimed to define target groups for which the analysis could help clarify the distinguishing

features of the groups, their sizes, their distinctness or otherwise, and so on. An academic and demographic profile of the participants follows:

- Of the nine survey participants, 89% were female who interned in the state of Georgia; 44% were in the fourth year of their study; 63% had a cumulative GPA above 3.0; 22% were in Journalism, 33% in Public Relations Management, and 44% in Radio/TV/Film.
- More than 78% chose Mass Media Arts major because they liked the field and 56% believed it led to a specific career.
- Eight out of nine participants (89%) had internship for course credit; 56% had internship for two semesters; 56% had more previous internship experience not with the same employer; 77% were part-time internships; and 67% had a full-time course load. All participants had internships in the areas related to Mass Media Arts.

For semistructured interviews the researcher selected and invited six participants from the administrative (co-curricular) and academic (curricular) areas at the case study institution which were familiar with the institution and department level internship program activities and were considered subject matter experts based on their current position, reporting structure, work experience and responsibilities toward experiential education. All participants were directly or indirectly involved in the internship or work-based learning related programming. All participants consented and completed interviews included in this study.

Table 4 provides a description of the participants' position area, primary role, reporting structure and years in current position at the case study institution.

Table 4

Description of Interview Participants

Participant	Title	Primary Role	Reporting Area	Years in
				Current Position
P-1	Administrative	Student Support Cocurricular Programs and Services	Student Affairs	3
P-2	Administrative	Student Support Cocurricular Programs and Services	Student Affairs	3
P-3	Administrative	Career Counseling and Placement Services	Student Affairs	3
P-4	Administrative	Career Counseling and Placement Services	Vice President, Student Affairs	3
P-5	Academic	Academic Administration and Supervision	Academic Affairs	2.5
P-6	Academic	Academic Administration and Supervision	Academic Affairs	2.5

Instrumentation and Data Collection

This study selected two data collection methods: (a) Survey of Student Internship Experience, and (b) semistructured interviews. The participants of the semistructured interviews, scheduled for up to one hour each, responded to RQ1 and RQ8 of this study while the Survey of Student Internship Experience addressed RQ5. Both methods of data were collected simultaneously before beginning the analysis.

A Survey of Student Internship Experience for this research was developed and modified, if necessary, by the researcher, based primarily on the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Questionnaire and Intern Bridge Survey. Questions in the survey instrument focused on the following: Internship related activities in the Mass Media Arts major (employers), academic and demographic information (e.g., gender, GPA, and area of internship), and a list of experiential learning expectations and outcomes.

A semistructured interview process was used to interview administrative and academic professional. This process combined a predetermined set of open-ended questions (to prompt discussion) with the opportunity for the researcher to further explore particular themes or responses and permitted the researcher flexibility to gain deeper knowledge of the inquiry under study. All participants were interviewed using the same questions with a provision for individual follow-up if needed. All interviews were held at the case study institution in a private conference room and were recorded for later transcription.

Field Notes Process

As part of the qualitative data collection, the researcher gathered field notes. These field notes were recorded and included all detailed anecdotal comments, descriptions, reactions, or feelings observed during the interview process. The recording of field notes was for the purposes of reflexivity as it relates to the interview data collection process. According to Creswell (2007), reflexivity is to recognize that all

writing is "positioned" (p. 179) which may include the researcher's values and/or potential for biases when presenting the findings.

Document Review Process

A document review of the case study institution and its departmental structure of internship program activities, policies and procedures were conducted. Internal documents for review were gathered from both departments of career services and Mass Media Arts, including reports of internship program events, schedules, participant guides, course syllabus and catalog, and departmental goals.

External documents included handbooks and guidelines used by national associations and organizations, federal/state agencies and colleges and universities for career services and employment recruiters. These documents explained the mission, purpose and role of different experiential learning (internships, co-op) and were useful for understanding some of the details for comparative purposes with the best practices and when referenced by interview participants. Each of the external documents was reviewed to identify the policies, procedures, and structures recognized as best practices. These practices were compared across selected agencies and institutional groups, and then matched with the policies, procedures, and existing structure of the case study institution. This method was used to identify the gaps in the institution's current program structures by comparing it to the idealized structures of the known industry standards. The qualitative findings from this document review process were incorporated in the study and helped determine the emergent themes.

Data Coding and Analysis

For qualitative data labeling and coding structure, the researcher developed codes for descriptive words or phrases for each unit of notes and labeled them to classify and assign meaning to pieces of information to be gathered. The data codes used were descriptive, labeling the salient aspect of the text from the documents. The similarities in words or phrases that are repeated were coded into related categories for further comparative analysis. This process was used to identify and refine key repeating concepts.

Expert Review

Credibility of data for this study is to reduce the researcher's bias in the process of collecting data. According to Patton (2002), the researcher must include a level of neutrality in research credibility. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data collection processes maintained a high level of credibility by avoiding questions in the survey instrument and in the interview process that can be perceived as researchers' personal opinion or perception.

A selected group of two subject matter experts were invited from the case study institution to review and recommend items and questions for improvement on data collection instruments. These experts included the Director of Institutional Research and the Director of Assessment. Each expert was expected to assist in either designing the research instruments for data collection or in administration of student survey.

Preliminary Survey Focus Group

The intent to utilize a focus group for this study was to generate insights that were unlikely to emerge under other circumstances. This technique allowed the researcher to firsthand insights into the respondents' experience, expectations, behaviors, and attitudes toward internship experience. A specific application of the focus group method in the study was to pretest the instrument, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and improve the research instrument. Therefore, before conducting the full study, a preliminary survey was administered to a randomly selected focus group of 10 students who recently completed an internship program in Mass Media Arts discipline and were currently at the case study institution. This process helped the researcher to (a) construct, revise, and evaluate the instrument, (b) measure sensitivity of the tool being used to establish research tool's internal validity and reliability, (c) validate content of the questionnaire, and (d) finalize the overall design of the study and internal validity at the institution. The survey tool was tested at the case study institution to finalize the overall design of the study instrument as well as internal validity at the institution. The same preliminary survey focus group was used to identify any possible areas for survey improvement before finalizing the survey for administration. The preliminary survey process used an instructional script, and the participants were asked to complete the survey.

The use of this sample to minimize sampling error, nonresponse error, and sampling bias and to contribute substantively to the validity of the data derived from survey analysis. The researcher obtained informed consent from the study participants to protect the ethical rights of the participants.

Data Trustworthiness and Credibility

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009), in order to determine trustworthiness of data in qualitative research, a researcher can use approaches such as, prolonged engagements, persistent observations, use of data triangulation techniques, member checks, thick descriptions, or reflexive journals. In this study, the researcher used data triangulation and member checks to support the trustworthiness of data.

Data Triangulation

For this study, in order to establish validity and reliability in both the intern survey and the semistructured interviews, the same questions were asked of the institution's administrators and faculty in the semistructured interviews. The similarity in these questions helped in connecting different perspectives of internship activity structures at all three levels—institution, student, and the employer organization. The responses from the semistructured interviews also helped identify any findings similar to the results of intern survey. Thus, data triangulation helped explain how internships as co-curricular activity were aligned with curriculum requirements.

Data Reliability and Validity

When conducting qualitative research, it is imperative to consider both validity and reliability of data collected and interpreted. Validity, defined as the best available approximation to the truth of a given proposition, inference, or conclusion while reliability is referenced as the consistency or repeatability of inferences researchers make about their data, over time, location and conditions (Trochim, 2008). Both are

methodological elements used as quality of measurement that define the accuracy of inferences researchers make about their data.

Validity is used to reduce the gap between reality and representation, and as a means to correct correlation between data and conclusion. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), the more data and conclusions are corresponding, the more a piece of qualitative research is valid. Thus, the researcher considered this study to be valid and reliable based on the concept entirely relative to the individual participants and the belief system from which their responses stems and the source materials giving the same results, assuming that what is being measured is not changing.

Member Checks

Member checks assisted with a purposeful sampling of selected credible participants and helped strengthen the validity and dependability of data collection. Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that member checking is the most crucial technique for establishing credibility. According to Creswell (2007), purposeful sampling is defined as "[the] inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem" (p. 125). For quantitative data, students who participated and completed the internship program were selected. For qualitative data, participants were selected based on their primary role and responsibilities in the area of student internship activities. For this study, all participants involved in internship related activities were engaged in answering the research questions due to their past or present experience and involvement in the internship program.

Researcher Trustworthiness and Credibility

The researcher took every precautionary measure to avoid any personal perspectives or opinions during the development and modification of the data collection survey and interview questions. A selected group of two subject matter experts were invited from the case study institution to review and recommend the improvement of survey items and interview questions on both data collection instruments. These experts included the Director of Institutional Research and the Director of Assessment. Each expert was expected to assist in either designing the research instruments for data collection or in administration of the student survey.

Transferability and Reflexivity

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability is defined in terms of how findings from such research can apply outside of the dissertation itself. Therefore, this study focused on helping other institutions of higher education in developing and implementing an internship program structure that is aligned with curricular and co-curricular support activities and designed to assist students in achieving their out of classroom learning experiences offered or encouraged by their major at their institutions. The findings from this research on the alignment of curricular, co-curricular support activities, and student out of class achievement is intended to provide best practice internship program structures and can be transferrable to other institutions of higher education. It also advocates the suggestion of Conrad and Serlin (2005) in that, “useful” research is that which can be “applicable to another setting or group” (p. 414).

According to Patton (2002), reflexivity is a critical component of developing and administering qualitative research. Reflexivity allows a researcher to observe so that he or she can be attentive to and conscious of the cultural, political, social, linguistic, and ideological origins of his or her own perspective and voice and often in contrast to the perspectives and voices he or she observes and talks to during fieldwork.

Ethical Considerations

In qualitative research, researcher bias can occur when the researcher performing the research influences the results in order to portray a certain outcome. When conducting such research, consideration must be given to researcher bias and ethical concerns. Research bias results from selective observations, selective recording of information, selective reporting of information, allowing personal views to affect data interpretation. It can be intentional or unintentional where the researcher holds particular beliefs (Shuttleworth, 2009). A researcher bias can be an unknown or unacknowledged error created during the design, measurement, sampling, procedure, or choice of problem studied. It can skew data, distort the truth, affect the validity and reliability of findings, and consequently may cloud the research.

Ethical considerations include actual data related management of proper data collection, storage, and use or interpretation of the data as well. To ensure the ethical integrity of this study, the researcher employed a triangulation approach of multiple data collection strategies. In addition, the researcher applied purposeful sampling techniques to conduct the research by making participants aware of the purpose of the study, created opportunities for open-ended interview responses, and explained how the data

information collected would be utilized (Creswell, 2007). The researcher created interview protocol, asked permission to record the session and transcribe the interview. Also, permission was secured to make copies of the responses of the student surveys for tabulations and use of document analysis provided by approval of the institution.

Protection of Human Subjects

Prior to beginning the data collection to complete research, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) prospectus was submitted to the institution of study for approval. The proposal included following details of the research to be conducted: purpose of the study, data collections processes and procedures, risks and benefits to research participants, recruitment procedures of participants, informed consent procedures, proposed data collection tools in the study, and proposed informed consent tools in the study. Semistructured interview participants who were invited to participate in the study will be provided with information on the purpose of the interview and the scope of the intended research study.

The researcher took into account the ethical principles of research and (a) obtained informed consent from research participants, (b) minimized the risk of harm to participants, (c) protected their anonymity and confidentiality, (d) avoided using deceptive practices, and (e) gave participants the right to withdraw from at any stage in the research process. All interview participants were given the same research questions. Prior to each scheduled interview, participants were provided with a copy of the participant consent form to be completed at the time of the interview. After the interview, all participants were asked for a follow-up interview if necessary. The researcher in this

study signed a confidentiality agreement form. The researcher coded each participant and did not attach or store information revealing their identification. The researcher used a secured lock-key file cabinet to store all field notes, taped audio/video recordings, and transcripts.

Development of Effective Internship Program Structures for Postgraduation Employability

The intent of this study was to make recommendations for an effective internship program structure based on gaps that may appear in the examination of the current program structures and idealized structures, standards and features as suggested by renowned associations such as the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), and the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM). In order to design and implement effective structures for the internship program, the researcher first examined the coordination of the existing management and operating structure of the internship programs at a postsecondary institution. Second, the study focused on clarifying whether internship requirements as experiential learning opportunity prepare students for practical experience through their chosen academic field that was beneficial to both the student and the employer. Third, whether such internship placements were aligned with employer readiness for interns to gain real world experience through knowledge and skills application for successful postgraduation employability. Figure 1 in Chapter I captures and summarizes a visual

representation of the relationships among institution/department, student intern, and employer.

Summary

Chapter IV explained the research design and methodology used in this study. This single case study employed a concurrent, nested mixed methods approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The three data collection strategies used for the study—survey/questionnaire, semistructured interviews, and document reviews of successful internship program models—were discussed in detail. The quantitative (survey instrument) and qualitative (semistructured interviews) approach for gathering, processing, and analyzing data was also briefly outlined in this chapter. Additionally, the methods used to ensure the validity, reliability, and transferability of the study were explained. This chapter also outlined the ethical considerations made, including the protection of human subjects.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

This study was designed to examine which undergraduate student internship program structures and components are most effective in experiential learning that benefits successful postgraduation employability of students. The study investigated the collaborative alignment between an institution's curricular and co-curricular (Mass Media Arts and Career Services Center) departments, participating interns, and employers to identify best industry practices in internship placement and develop a new model of integrated activities among the three stakeholders for implementation across postsecondary institutions. As stated by Miles and Huberman (1994), "numbers and words are both needed if we are to understand the world" (p. 40), thus this research study employed a nested mixed methods approach within a framework of quantitative and qualitative data to yield benefits in data credibility, validity, triangulation and usefulness of findings (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Plano Clark & Creswell, 2007).

The Convergence of Facts approach as outlined in Figure 6 was used to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data obtained through various sources. Based on the analysis, the research identified emergent themes from each source.

Qualitatively, this study examined how well the institution's curricular and co-curricular structures aligned internship activities with student preparation and employer readiness structure. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with six administrative professionals (two senior administrators, two career service center staff members, one dean of school of arts and sciences, and one department chair/internship coordinator and advisor) all familiar with the institution and department level internship program. This approach allowed the researcher to conduct the case study in a natural setting and seek responses to the "how" and "what" questions to compile a detailed analytical narrative (Creswell, 1998).

The semistructured interview process combined a pre-determined set of open-ended questions (to prompt discussion) with the opportunity for the researcher to further explore particular themes or responses. This process permitted the researcher flexibility to gain deeper knowledge of the inquiry under study. The research protocol included a letter of invitation, IRB consent form, interview protocol and transcription as well as scripted structured sequence of open-ended research questions to be asked in the same way of all interviewees as presented in Appendix B. With participant consent, the researcher recorded each interview and later transcribed them for analysis. The guiding research questions were divided into three parts: (a) relationship between the internship program and the institution (internship program structure, relationship between academic program and co-curricular units, program design for on-the-job requirements, preparing, matching and placing interns), (b) relationship between internship program and the employer, and (c) institutional challenges facing the internship program.

Document review and analysis of successful employer internship program models at other universities and agencies based on best industry practices were conducted in this study to assist the researcher with qualitative findings and to identify the emergent themes. Internal documents and reports about internship programs were collected from the departments of Career Services and Mass Media Arts at the case study institution, while model guides and policy manuals on internship relevant industry established trends, standards and best practices were collected from renowned external agencies, associations and other colleges and universities. The information gleaned from the document review was applied to benchmark effective practices for meaningful comparison against data gathered from the interviewees using inductive process. In order to identify underlying themes using the entire data collection, a constant comparative qualitative data analysis was used for this study (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

Instrument Data Analysis

Survey Questionnaire

Quantitative data in a concurrent mixed-methods approach is nested within a qualitative study by Plano Clark and Creswell (2007). A quantitative survey instrument was distributed by the researcher through email invitation to completers of internships in the Mass Media Arts Department at the case study institution to collect data regarding their most recent internship experience. The student internship experience survey consisted of a 25-item questionnaire. The first 15 items on the survey were related to participants' demographic and academic information, and the remaining questions examined the reason(s) for interning, type of information sources used for acquiring

internship, services used from institutional career center, intern match with employer, type of information provided by career services center, mass media arts department, and host employer, and internship program experience at the institution, host employer, student preparation. The last item was an open-ended satisfaction question asking participants the overall value and reward of their internship experience. Statistical data results from the Student Internship Experience Survey of Mass Media Arts interns were labeled and tabulated to classify and assign meaning to all items on the survey using the internal analysis tool from Snap Survey Software.

Survey Analysis

According to Gay and Airasian (2000), quantitative data “are used to describe current conditions, investigate relationships, and study cause-effect phenomena” (p. 11). Therefore, the researcher examined survey results to identify high and low ratings on each response to discover differences as well as connections that may exist between the participants’ formative experiences and the practices of the institution and the site employers. The researcher further explored the factors that positively or negatively influenced the participants’ level of preparation, placement, and satisfaction of the internship experience. Each of these factors was compared to the qualitative semistructured interview data.

Although the results of a quantitative survey gives the researcher the opportunity to analyze potential correlation between the participants’ general information and responses to the internship experience information, the scope of data collection from this survey was intended to cross reference findings with the qualitative information. The

researcher created one-way tables that supplied the basic information needed to tabulate results, question by question, using the frequency or number of participants who “checked each box.” While this process did not identify which participants produced particular combinations of responses, it served as a first step to a quick and/or simple summary needed.

Demographic and academic data was collected to acknowledge participants as homogeneous group to create a profile of participants in order to comprise a set of values for a set of predetermined indicators. This profile was aimed to define target groups for which the analysis could help clarify the distinguishing features of the groups, their sizes, their distinctness or otherwise, and so on.

Coding

The researcher, through computer assisted Snap Survey Software, completed the following steps:

1. Coded data in number form with less clear-cut numerical meaning, as follows.
Binary data such as yes/no data – coded in 1/0 form while purely categorical or nominal data such as classification or grade point average (GPA) coded in 1, 2, 3... numbering as arbitrary labels.
2. Ordered categorical data for responses to attitude statement items rated as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. With ordered categorical data, the number labels formed a rational sequence, because they have some numerical meaning (e.g., scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for strongly agree through to strongly disagree).

3. Interpreted and ranked results based on response order by high to low numerical values.
4. Identified indicators after data collection and during analysis to ensure indicators served to describe the relevant issues and groups.
5. Summarized useful data numerically.
6. Selected the most effective indicators.

This statistical process focused on basic analysis techniques by using a quick review of the results, followed by editing, tabulating, and reporting to turn data into actionable information through in-depth comparisons between questions to identify trends or relationships.

Description of Demographic/Academic Data

Of the nine survey participants, 89% were female who interned in the state of Georgia; 44% were in the fourth year of their study; 63% had a cumulative GPA above 3.0; 22% were in Journalism, 33% in Public Relations Management, and 44% in Radio/TV/Film. More than 78% chose Mass Media Arts major because they liked the field and 56% believed it led to a specific career. Eight out of nine participants (89%) had internship for course credit; 56% had internship for two semesters; 56% had more previous internship experience not with the same employer; 77% were part-time internships; 67% had a full-time course load. All participants had internships in the areas related to Mass Media Arts.

Semistructured Interviews

The qualitative data analysis was constructed from the semistructured interviews that were conducted with six participants from the case study institution. The interview data were transcribed and read by the researcher several times to understand meaningful nuances, capture useful insights, and determine patterns, themes or concepts emerging from the interviews (Charmaz, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In the first round of analysis the researcher engaged in the initial coding of the data collected from the interviews by examining the responses of the participants for each of the seven sections of the interview.

The researcher used Microsoft Word functions to analyze the transcribed text and formulate comparative tables. According to LaPelle (2004), Microsoft Word can be utilized to support qualitative data analysis for data management and analysis functions in which the software table structure performs as a database that

Can be used for coding and retrieving, semi-automated coding and inspection, creating hierarchies of code categories via indexing, global editing of theme codes, coding of “fact-sheet” data, exploring relationships between face-sheet codes and conceptual codes, quantifying the frequency of code instances, and annotating text. (p. 2)

The researcher followed LaPelle’s guidelines for analyzing the data collected from the interviews. The following steps were implemented:

1. Formatted the data into a table by columns and rows;
2. Identified and logically organized themes for each section of the interview;

3. Examined the patterns in themes to reorganize;
4. Thematic coding was utilized to categorize multiple themes into broad categories;
5. Sorted and reorganized the data to identify pattern by doing comparative analysis;
6. Validated the coding with emerging themes from the other data collection instruments.

Coding

An open coding was applied to analyze the formatted data table in order to note reoccurring themes that were significant to the study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) indicate coding as “part of the analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorization of phenomena through close examination of data” (p. 62). In addition, they posit that “during open coding the data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, and compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomena as reflected in the data” (p. 62). The researcher followed a streamlined coding process illustrated in Figure 7. As each participant’s response was examined, the similarities in words or phrases that were repeated were coded into related themes. Each coded theme was compared for repetitive or reoccurring patterns to determine similarities and differences among the themes and further searched for saturation and linkage between each theme (Charmaz, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). This effort resulted in assertions that summarized how the participants described the internship program structure and its alignment among the stakeholders within the institution.

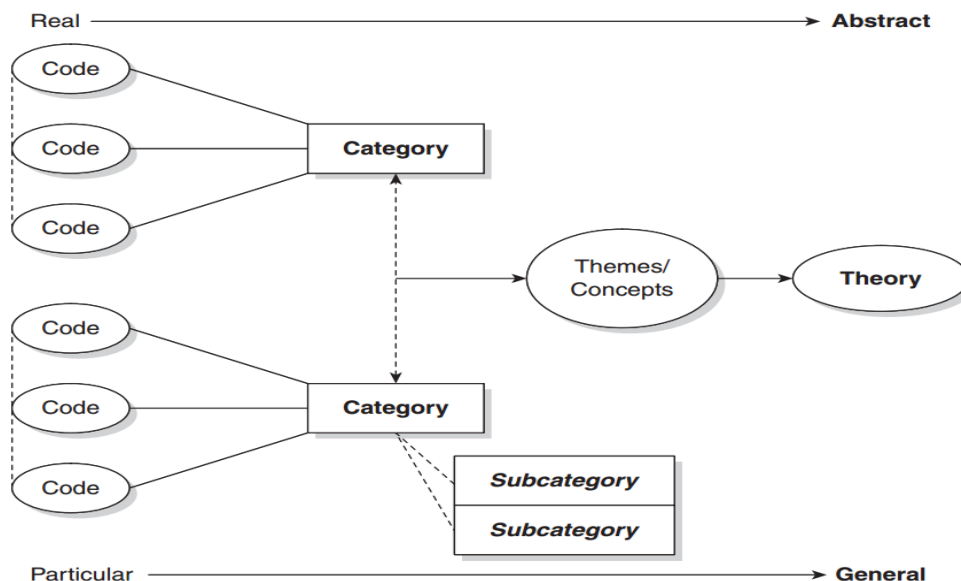


Figure 7. Streamlined Coding Process (Adapted from *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* by Johnny Saldana, 2009, p. 12)

The first iteration of coding involved an in-depth review of each transcript to get a sense of participant responses as well as identify key words and phrases from each question answered. A list of all different phrases was created from each participant's response. After completing the first review, the researcher analyzed each transcript for a second time. In this step, key words and phrases identified during the initial review were combined with participant profile and field notes to determine additional patterns. This process resulted in a list of general themes from the participant's responses.

The second reiteration of coding involved comparison of emerging patterns from each participant. In this step, responses to each interview question were compared and contrasted to determine if the patterns identified in one transcript were present in the next (Merriam, 1998). The process of coding the second document in contrast with the first

one is significant to maximize the full benefit of concepts (Bazeley, 2007). This method of comparing the first transcript with the second continued with the third and so forth. A final list of all themes developed from each interview question was prepared and recorded. This process allowed the researcher to discover additional reoccurring patterns or themes in reference to the research questions.

In the third iteration of coding, all participant transcripts were reviewed for a final time to account for any additional data. Since table structures are powerful tools for data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), a two-column table was created to organize data. The first column was for the categorical coding and the second column was to identify reoccurring patterns or themes from participant interviews. The table in Appendix C shows the formatted structure of categorical concepts and examples of reoccurring patterns (themes) from responses of the interviewees. The emerging themes drawn from the interview questions (reoccurring patterns) were grouped by categorical concepts as indicated in Table 5.

Document Review and Studies

In an effort to gain in-depth understanding of the internship program processes and industry best practices to assist with the comparative analysis of the study, the researcher utilized a document review approach and examined relevant internal and external documents outlined in Table 6.

Table 5

Emerging Themes Grouped by Categorical Concepts

	STUDENT	EMPLOYER	PROGRAM
PROGRAM STRUCTURE	PREPARATION	RELATIONS	EVALUATION
Organization	Skill-Sets	Support/Connection	Data/Information
Value	Guidance/Advising	Campus Visit	Learning Outcomes
Administrative Commitment	Reflection on Experience	Engagement/Input	Feedback
Collaboration/ Involvement	Participation/ Training	Reputation	Assessment Process
Course Design	Intern Criteria		Tracking

Table 6

List of Documents Reviewed

Internal Documents	External Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institution's Strategic Plan • Institution's Organizational Chart • Career and Professional Development Operating Procedures Manual • Undergraduate Course Catalog • Mass Media Arts Department Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mass Media Internship Course Syllabus ✓ Final Portfolio Requirement ✓ Daily Journal Log ✓ Site supervisor evaluation form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education • NSEE - Strengthening Experimental Education: A New Era • The SHRM Guide to Organizing an Internship Program • Experiential Education: Internship & Cooperative Education – A Handbook for Practitioners & Administrators • Best Practices in Career Services for Graduating Students

(continued)

Table 6 (continued)

Internal Documents	External Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Internship timesheet ✓ Internship learning agreement (Department coordinator, student, and site supervisor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer's Guidebook to Developing a Successful Internship Program

The internal documents in Table 6 were gathered from the case study institution's Career Services and Mass Media Arts Departments to provide an overview of the internship activities and the interaction between the career services supported programs and the Mass Media Arts Department's internship program. External documents included handbooks and guidelines used by national associations and organizations, federal/state agencies and colleges and universities for career services and employment recruiters. These documents explained the mission, purpose and role of different experiential learning (internships, co-op) and were useful for understanding some of the details for comparative purposes with the best practices and when referenced by interview participants. Each of the external documents was reviewed to identify the policies, procedures and structures recognized as best practices. These practices were compared across selected agencies and institutional groups, and then matched with the policies, procedures and existing structure of the case study institution. This method was used to identify the gaps in the institution's current program structures by comparing it to the idealized structures of the known industry standards.

Several national professional and academic organizations including the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), the Cooperative Education and Internship Association (CEIA), and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) have recommended and provided standards and guidelines for best practices in experiential education. Many federal, state, and regional agencies, as well as postsecondary institutions also offer guidance on organizing and sustaining effective work-based learning programs. The table in Appendix D provides an overview of comparative analysis of document reviews conducted on best practice industry standards for internship program institutions.

During the document analysis the researcher analyzed industry standards in internship practices and compared to the case study institution practices. CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education (2009) in collaboration with the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) has established fourteen key success standards for all experiential education programs including cooperative education and internships: Mission, Program, Leadership, Human Resources, Ethics, Legal Responsibilities, Equity and Access, Diversity, Organization and Management, Campus and External Relations, Financial Resources, Technology, Facilities and Equipment, Assessment and Evaluation. NSEE (1998) has published eight essential principles of good practice that all experiential education program activities should include: Intention, Preparedness and Planning, Authenticity, Reflection, Orientation and Training, Monitoring and Continuous Improvement, Assessment and Evaluation, and

Acknowledgment. Table 7 and Table 8 provide details of CAS and NSEE key success standards and principles suggested for all experiential education programs and activities.

Table 7

CAS Professional Standards for Experiential Education Programs

CAS General Standards		
1	Mission	Programs and services must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their mission.
2	Program	The formal education of students, consisting of the curriculum and the co-curriculum, must promote student learning and development outcomes that are purposeful and holistic and that prepare students for satisfying and productive lifestyles, work, and civic participation.
3	Leadership	Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations.
4	Human Resources	Programs and services must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish the mission and goals.
5	Ethics	Staff must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior and ensure privacy and confidentiality.
6	Legal Responsibilities	Staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective responsibilities and that may pose legal obligations, limitations, or ramifications for the institution as a whole.
7	Equity and Access	Programs and services must be provided on a fair, equitable, and nondiscriminatory basis in accordance with institutional policies and with all applicable state/provincial and federal statutes and regulations.
8	Diversity	Within the context of each institution's unique mission, diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, programs and services must create and nurture environments that are welcoming to and bring together persons of diverse backgrounds.

(continued)

Table 7 (continued)

CAS General Standards		
9	Organization and Management	To promote student learning and development outcomes, programs and services must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals.
10	Campus and External Relations	Programs and services must reach out to relevant individuals, campus offices, and external agencies.
11	Financial Resources	Programs and services must have adequate funding to accomplish their mission and goals.
12	Technology	Programs and services must have adequate technology to support their mission.
13	Facilities and Equipment	Programs and services must have adequate, accessible, suitably located facilities and equipment to support their mission and goals.
14	Assessment and Evaluation	Programs and services must establish systematic plans and processes to meet internal and external accountability expectations with regard to program as well as student learning and development outcomes.

Note. Adapted from *CAS Professional Standards For Higher Education* (7th ed.), 2009

Table 8

NSEE Principles of Good Practice for Experiential Education Programs

NSEE Principles of Good Practice		
1	Intention	All parties must be clear from the outset why experience is the chosen approach to the learning that is to take place and to the knowledge that will be demonstrated, applied or result from it. Intention represents the purposefulness that enables experience to become knowledge and, as such, is deeper than the goals, objectives, and activities that define the experience.

(continued)

Table 8 (continued)

NSEE Principles of Good Practice		
2	Preparedness and Planning	Participants must ensure that they enter the experience with sufficient foundation to support a successful experience. They must also focus from the earliest stages of the experience/program on the identified intentions, adhering to them as goals, objectives and activities are defined. The resulting plan should include those intentions and be referred to on a regular basis by all parties. At the same time, it should be flexible enough to allow for adaptations as the experience unfolds.
3	Authenticity	The experience must have a real world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation. This means that it should be designed in concert with those who will be affected by or use it, or in response to a real situation.
4	Reflection	Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. For knowledge to be discovered and internalized the learner must test assumptions and hypotheses about the outcomes of decisions and actions taken, then weigh the outcomes against past learning and future implications. This reflective process is integral to all phases of experiential learning, from identifying intention and choosing the experience, to considering preconceptions and observing how they change as the experience unfolds. Reflection is also an essential tool for adjusting the experience and measuring outcomes.
5	Orientation and Training	For the full value of the experience to be accessible to both the learner and the learning facilitator(s), and to any involved organizational partners, it is essential that they be prepared with important background information about each other and about the context and environment in which the experience will operate. Once that baseline of knowledge is addressed, ongoing structured development opportunities should also be included to expand the learner's appreciation of the context and skill requirements of her/his work.

(continued)

Table 8 (continued)

NSEE Principles of Good Practice		
6	Monitoring and Continuous Improvement	Any learning activity will be dynamic and changing, and the parties involved all bear responsibility for ensuring that the experience, as it is in process, continues to provide the richest learning possible, while affirming the learner. It is important that there be a feedback loop related to learning intentions and quality objectives and that the structure of the experience be sufficiently flexible to permit change in response to what that feedback suggests. While reflection provides input for new hypotheses and knowledge based in documented experience, other strategies for observing progress against intentions and objectives should also be in place. Monitoring and continuous improvement represent the formative evaluation tools.
7	Assessment and Evaluation	Outcomes and processes should be systematically documented with regard to initial intentions and quality outcomes. Assessment is a means to develop and refine the specific learning goals and quality objectives identified during the planning stages of the experience, while evaluation provides comprehensive data about the experiential process as a whole and whether it has met the intentions which suggested it.
8	Acknowledgement	Recognition of learning and impact occur throughout the experience by way of the reflective and monitoring processes and through reporting, documentation and sharing of accomplishments. All parties to the experience should be included in the recognition of progress and accomplishment. Culminating documentation and celebration of learning and impact help provide closure and sustainability to the experience.

Note. Adapted from The National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), 1998.

Comparative Analysis

All data collected from both quantitative and qualitative pieces of information (interview transcripts, document review analysis, and intern survey data related to Mass Media Arts internship experience) were combined to analyze, compare and synthesize the results to arrive at findings and conclusions to yield new integrated information as a whole. Both the statistical and interview-based approaches were examined to see if they gave a consistent explanation: for example, whether the institution's departments of career services and Mass Media Arts provided a structured (centralized) program or services that prepared employers and internship participants to meet the expected learning outcomes and career expectations of all parties involved. All findings presented are based on the research questions, survey results, and document analysis.

Summary

This chapter examined the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the student survey questionnaire (quantitative), semistructured interviews and document reviews (qualitative) for analysis and fact finding. Each survey data collected was coded and analyzed using the SNAP survey software and its internal analysis tool. This statistical process focused on basic analysis techniques by using a quick review of the results, followed by editing, tabulating, and reporting to turn data into actionable information through in-depth comparisons between questions to identify trends or relationships.

Semistructured interviews were recorded and transcribed. An open coding was applied to analyze transcripts and formatted in data table in order to note reoccurring

themes that were significant to the study. A table of categorical concepts and reoccurring patterns (themes) was developed and the emergent themes were drawn and grouped by collapsing the categorical concepts from interview questions (reoccurring patterns).

A document review matrix was used to examine relevant internal and external documents for comparative analysis of industry standards provided by national professional organizations such as CAS, and NSEE in internship practices to the case study institution. All data collected from both quantitative and qualitative pieces of information were combined to analyze, compare, and synthesize the results to arrive at findings and conclusions to yield new integrated information as a whole.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed-methods research study was to examine which undergraduate student internship program structures and components are most effective in experiential learning that benefits successful postgraduation employability of students. The study investigated the collaborative alignment between an institution's curricular and co-curricular (Mass Media Arts and Career Services Center) departments, participating interns, and employers to identify best industry practices in internship placement and develop a new model of integrated activities among the three stakeholders for implementation across postsecondary institutions.

Quantitatively, this study examined the student interns' experience from their most recent participation in the internship program. The Student Internship Experience Survey was designed to document students' perception whether or not the hands-on experience had improved their ability to gain postgraduation employment. Qualitatively, this study examined how well the institution's curricular and co-curricular structures aligned internship activities with student preparation and employer readiness structure.

Semistructured interviews were carried out with six administrative professionals (two senior administrators, two career service center staff members, one dean of school of arts and sciences, and one department chair/internship coordinator and advisor) all

familiar with the institution and department level internship program. In addition, document reviews of case study institution and other professional and academic organizations were conducted to gain in-depth understanding of the internship program processes and related best industry practices to identify emergent themes.

The following research questions were explored pertaining to each of the independent variables of the study:

- RQ1: What are the understandings of the institution's professionals regarding the expectations and success of the internship program activities?
- RQ2: How does the internship program structure impact the success of experiential education?
- RQ3: How are academic programs designed to prepare interns for on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?
- RQ4: How does the evaluation of the internship program impact the overall program structure?
- RQ5: What curricular and co-curricular support processes are designed to prepare interns for successful placement?
- RQ6: How does student preparation impact their on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?
- RQ7: How does student perception of their level of preparedness for internship impact their performance/experience?
- RQ8: What internship program structure does the employer have for appropriate intern placement?

RQ9: How does the employers' level of readiness for interns meet the institution's expectations?

RQ10: How does the relationship between the institution and the potential employer impact interns' placement rates and their employment

The conclusions were drawn by comparing and combining experiences from each of the participating internship students and administrative/academic personnel groups.

Findings

Included in the findings are direct quotes from participants. Table 9 shows the dates of interviews for coded participant responses.

Table 9

Participant Interview Dates

Participant	Interview Dates	Title	Primary Role
P-1	2/11/2015	Administrative	Student Support Co-curricular Programs & Services
P-2	2/13/2015	Administrative	Student Support Co-curricular Programs and Services
P-3	2/11/2015	Administrative	Career Counseling & Placement Services
P-4	2/10/2015	Administrative	Career Counseling & Placement Services
P-5	2/13/2015	Academic	Academic Administration & Supervision
P-6	2/10/2015	Academic	Academic Administration & Supervision

RQ 1: What are the understandings of the institution's professionals regarding the expectations and success of the internship program activities?

Each interview participant was asked to provide a definition of internship at institutional and departmental level, and describe the functional mission (purpose) of

their current internship program. While there is no accepted standardized definition used across the institution, each participant provided a clear definition of an internship with palpable similarities. For example, Participant 2 (P-2), an administrative participant, stated that an internship is “an experience between what students learn in the classroom and real work... it puts some practical aspects to what they’re learning in the classroom so that they can develop the skills to become employable in that field of study.”

Participant 4 (P-4), also an administrative participant described internships as, “an opportunity sponsored through a corporation to have student work for a semester...where the students apply the theoretical concepts that they’ve learn in the classroom to practical application with a corporate entity.” Similarly, Participant 6 (P-6), a participant from the academic area, defined an internship as, “(an opportunity) providing student with practical experiences in the field where they are able to apply the skills that they have learned while they are enrolled at the university.” Participant 5 (P-5), another participant in the academic area, defined internships as

Opportunities to apply what they have learned so those cognate skills, those quantitative and qualitative skills that they learned, those things provide the applicable settings for the connection between what is learned in the classroom and what is happening outside in the real world.

All participants were also very clear on their understanding of the actual functional mission of an ideal internship program and were able to describe its core purpose.

Participant 1 (P-1, Administrative) indicated that the purpose was “to actually buffer and accentuate what student learn in the academic classroom...have those co-curricular

activities that enhance what you are learning in the classroom.” Participant 2 (P-2, Administrative) defined it as, “help students to crystalize what their field of study is and provide an opportunity for them to gain work experience that’s relevant to that particular career field.” Participant 3 (P-3), another administrative participant, indicated that the purpose of the internship was to do the following:

Expose students to various career options to help them to determine what they’re pursuing is it the direction in which they want to go professionally making them professional ...it gives them an edge on really getting an early introduction as to what their career field may actually look like.

Participant 4 (P-4, Administrative) defined it as an opportunity, “to assist students and apply their theoretical concepts to practical applications... so that they could understand what they are actually learning in the classroom and how it applies to the specific discipline that they are going into.”

According to Participant 5 (P-5, Academic) the purpose of internship is to provide an opportunity for student to take, “a culmination of all what they have learned and finally the application of that.” Participant 6 (P-6, Academic) defined the mission/purpose as simply combining, “experiential learning and practical application.” For the participants, the achievement of the internship mission/purpose is how they define success.

While the professionals at this institution had a clear understanding of the institution’s expectations and success measures of the internship program activities, this understanding was more in theoretical and not an established practice at the institution.

RQ2: How does the internship program structure impact the success of experiential education?

According to P-5 and P-6, the Mass Media Arts internship is currently an elective three credit hour semester course in which students can enroll twice to receive a maximum of six credit hours toward degree completion. The department has established student learning outcomes for the internship course. The institution's current undergraduate catalog describes the internship course as a part-time placement in professional media facility in Atlanta and other cities; emphasis on learning overall business structure and developing skills for entry-level decision-making positions (Prerequisites: Senior status and permission of the department chair).

The catalog further explains that internships are academically monitored learning experiences in professional partner organizations. The department has an internship coordinator or internship faculty on staff. According to P-5, the department's internships are vetted by the coordinator or the chair, and the students are matched based on their interests and other eligibility. There is no institutional internship structural requirements imposed on the department; therefore, according to P-6, the current internship structure is based on "best practices."

Despite the description provided by the participants, many aspects and facets of the current program are not aligned with the industry best practices. There is a clear lapse in how the program is organized, formalized and communicated to students. For example, the academic participants indicated that juniors and seniors are eligible to participate in Mass Media Arts internship program; however, the catalog clearly states that students

must be of senior status and attain the department chair's permission to participate.

Furthermore, because the internship course is an elective course it becomes difficult for the department to authentically assess the overall impact on experiential learning in the field of study as student enrollment is relatively low. During fall 2013, only 10% of the total students eligible (juniors and seniors) enrolled in the internship course and in fall 2014 total participation was 9%.

Furthermore, there is also a lack of structural interaction and communication between the academic department and the Career Services Center (co-curricular). Currently the institution's internship program structure is "decentralized" in terms of student placement. Most academic internship placements are coordinated through the academic departments however, career services is responsible for the coordination of general student training and student placement services for the institution. These include orientation to prepare students for internships, employer career fairs, electronic tools for job searches, and professional development training sessions for students including mock-interviews, resume writing, and professional demeanor. However, these resources are essentially ignored because of the decentralization of these units.

Career services should essentially be used as a resource that the department can leverage to strengthen their internship program. This should be a symbiotic relationship in the sense that the department should be able to share pertinent placement information that informs the activities organized by career services. For example, based on departmental data, career services should be able to determine which employers they need to recruit to bring on campus to meet student placement needs. They should also be

able to tailor the services provided to enhance curricular related learning based on departmental data.

While the institutional participants state their commitment to the function and value of internship programs, because of the disconnect of curricular and co-curricular functions, and poor record keeping procedures, the Mass Media Arts Department or the institution is not able to adequately place students at appropriate internship site nor they are able to report on the success of student experiential education experience. The internship experience survey of Mass Media Arts student revealed that 78% (7/9) participants did not use the campus career services and all participants indicated that they were not matched and placed with an employer, and found internship sites on their own.

RQ3: How are academic programs designed to prepare interns for on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?

According to academic participants P-5 and P-6, the program curriculum is “reviewed to ensure that the program meets its intended learning outcomes required in the field.” P-6 stated that even though the current program is not accredited, “the department uses the external standards of their accrediting body, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), as a best practice in developing a curriculum and internship student learning outcomes that are relevant.” In addition, to further ensure “curriculum relevancy,” P-5 reported that the department engages in a vetting process for the courses and learning outcomes. This involves employer input on existing courses and course content, as well as having alumni unofficially serve as part of the curriculum review body. The Accrediting Council on

Education in Journalism and Mass Communications provides an extensive list of program learning outcomes to prepare students to work in a diverse and domestic society which they require all Mass Media Arts graduates to master. As a high impact and best practice, the internship is used as a capstone experience that allows students to demonstrate the mastery of the acquired program knowledge, competencies and values. Conversely, the Mass Media Arts Department at this institution has only established one student learning outcome for its internship program, which differs from the ACEJMC required outcomes outlined in Table 10.

Table 10

ACEJMC Required Student Outcomes

Professional Values and Competencies	
1. Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;	2. Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;	4. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;

(continued)

Table 10 (continued)

Professional Values and Competencies	
5. Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;	6. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
7. Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;	8. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
9. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;	10. Think critically, creatively and independently;
11. Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.	12. Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

Note. Adapted from *Accrediting Standards* by ACEJMC, 2013

While the department offers at least two special courses that are flexible in nature and evolves with the industry demands which allow students to focus on “current media themes...and trends,” according to P-5, there are a number of current courses that are “outdated or outmoded.” P-5 confirms that there is a concern in the design of the academic programs and how it addresses competencies necessary to transition into the marketplace and connects with employer expectations.

Furthermore, research shows that today’s employers are not only looking for academically strong students, they also require students to have specific soft-skills such as, leadership ability, interpersonal skill, organizational skills, research, and presentation skills. At this case study institution, a number of participants expressed concerns about

the lack of student learning outcomes developed to address soft-skills such as, the art of conversation, presentation, and interviews or even appropriate response to a professional email into the workplace. Essentially, the current academic program is not designed to support the experience and the competencies necessary for student to transition into the workforce.

RQ4: How does the evaluation of the internship program impact the overall program structure?

According to P-6, the Mass Media Arts Department's internship experience is offered as an elective course and as such, it is evaluated at the course level as indicated in the course syllabus and has not been used to determine any significant impact at the program level. In addition, P-6 also admitted that there is no formalized structured process in place to effectively evaluate the internship program and provide the type of information needed to improve the overall program structure. According P-6, the site supervisor evaluates the student intern using the evaluation form provided by the department. This completed evaluation form is submitted to the department and include feedback on the overall student performance. There are no formal requirements for the host employer (site supervisor) to provide formative feedback during the internship. Additionally, the site supervisor suggests a grade based on a scale provided by the department, and the students provide a reflection paper outlining their experience. The department instructors do not have any type of evaluation process for the interns although students earn three credits and an academic grade for the course. Still, most of the students surveyed stated that they were not made aware of the internship evaluation

process prior to interning; only 33% of the survey respondents indicated that they were made aware of the evaluation and reflection requirement prior to starting the internship.

P-6 also noted that the Mass Media Arts Department reviews the intern evaluation results and the student reflection to first “decide whether or not the internship was a viable experience so that the department could continue the relationship with the employer,” and secondly “get an understanding of how students are performing and whether or not the program is preparing them for employment.” However, there was no mention from any of the participants of how the information gathered is directly used for program/curricula improvements. Furthermore, the information collected, according to P-6, is not shared with all faculty members on a consistent basis, which limits the department’s ability to review the data trend and make informed decisions for improvements.

RQ5: What curricular and co-curricular support processes are designed to prepare interns for successful placement?

The curricular support process for successful student placement at this institution is inconsistent and needs improvement. Although the academic participants noted the significance of this experience, and the value that it adds to students in such an evolving field, the Mass Media Arts Department does not make experiential learning a mandatory requirement of its curriculum or degree program. As mentioned, the department offers internship courses as an elective three credit hour semester length course. The course enrollment is solely based on student interest.

Students who do decide to take this course are not provided with any formal documents outside of the course syllabus to guide them through the process. Also, there are no handbooks or guidelines published or distributed by the department to direct students to the program. The institution's undergraduate catalog does not contain pertinent information such as internship program requirements, or what type of curricular support services are provided to prepare students for internship or successfully place students with appropriate employers.

The department does not actively seek out employers/internship sites and as a result many students find their own internship site. Although 90% of the students surveyed completed the internship for credit, only 22% of the students reported that their internship was secured through assistance provided by the department, the remaining 88% found their site on their own. The survey revealed that the department is not encouraging students as they should as only one of the students surveyed stated that their reason for participating in the internship was because it was strongly recommended by a faculty advisor.

There are a number of co-curricular support services provided by the Career Services Center, including placement orientation sessions where students "are informed of their expectations, how they will be evaluated and what they must do to get ready for the "real world" of work prior to being placed in an internship, according to P-1. Participant 1 also reported that the Center offers two annual career fairs inviting 45-50 employers to the campus, facilitates students access to employer via e-recruit, and provides a number of informal meetings and work sessions for students such as resume

writing and review workshops to vet student resumes, mock interviews, and portfolios training sessions. Still, the co-curricular support services provided by the Career Services Center are not structured to fully support students for successful internship placement. The Center does not actively seek out students, so while these services are available to all students, many students are not aware of them. According to the student internship experience survey, only one out of nine students surveyed utilized career services for placement guidance and it was via the Center's electronic job posting board. None of the students surveyed actually used the Career Services Center for placement assistance prior to their internship. Moreover, the Center and the departments currently operate separately/ independently; therefore, the Center is unable to make informed decisions on which employers to invite to campus, and there is no cross-sharing of data or feedback on internship experiences or placement sites between the departments and the Center.

RQ6: How does student preparation impact their on-the-job requirements and employer expectations?

This impact of student preparation for on the job requirement and employer expectation was measured through the Mass Media Arts Student Internship Experience Survey. According to survey results, 56% (5 of 9) of participants agreed that the courses they took prior to the internship properly prepared them for the internship experience. All five of the students that confirmed that they were prepared for "real-world experience" due to prior coursework also indicated that they received some form of validation from the employer regarding their job performance. These students all agreed that their site employer appreciated and recognized their good performance on the job. This population

of students also indicated that they acquired knowledge beneficial to their current study that enhanced what they were taught in the classroom indicating that there is a correlation between what is taught in the classroom and what they actually experienced.

While this is a good indicator, there were still 44% (4/9) students who did not share this view. Furthermore, these students all secured their own placement, which is an indicator that they were self-motivated. It is also important to get in mind that this is a perceived level of preparedness and only 25% (2/8) of the respondents reported that they were offered a full-time position by their internship organization. This gap between student perceived skills and employers' evaluation of students' skills in actual employability was reviewed in a current research study conducted by Harris Interactive® for the Chegg Company (2013). In this study, 50% of the students indicated that they were "job ready;" however, the hiring managers reported that only 39% were ready.

RQ7: How does student perception of their level of preparedness for internship impact their performance/experience?

The evaluation of students' level of preparation for internship experience is critical for measuring their confidence and overall perceived ability to perform on the job. Of the students surveyed, 78% (7/9) felt confident in their ability to connect academic subject matter to a real world experience, and the same 78% of students were also confident in their ability to excel in the work environment. Additionally, 89% of the students felt their preparation for the internship positively impacted their performance, and 67% felt confident they would attain a position in the organization they interned with, or a similar organization. Of those students that indicated they felt prepared, 86%

(6/7) indicated that after completing the internship they would likely gain full-time employment at the internship site or similar organization.

The survey results clearly indicated that students perceive hands-on experience as important means to gain industry connection and validate their classroom learning. The survey showed that 78% (7/9) choose to participate in internship to gain hands-on experience in their major area of study; 79% participated to become better prepared for employment in their field; 78% participated to gain professional development and personal growth; 78% participated to learn new skills and gain realistic preview of the workplace; and 89% reported that they participated to network and make professional contacts.

The survey also confirmed a positive correlation between that the students' perceived level of preparation and self-motivation. All of the students (7/7) who indicated that they were confident in their ability to "connect academic subject matter to a real world experience," and "excel in the work environment" also sought and secured an internship through sources other than those provided by the institution.

RQ8: What internship program structure does the employer have for appropriate intern placement?

This question was designed to study how the institution aligned itself with the host employers in regards to placing students. Therefore, consideration to developing and maintain relationships as well as selection, approval and evaluation of host employers and job sites must be given.

Research indicates that one of the most successful achievements of completing an internship is securing a job. Therefore, it is critical to know what employers look for when seeking the perfect individual for the job and are they “good fit” for the institution. According to Hart Research Associates (2013), a notable portion of employers (47%) have partnerships with colleges and universities in their communities to offer internships to students and an additional 42% have indicated interest in developing internship program relationship in the future. However, only 47% of employers have a structured internship program as indicated by Infographic Internships Survey and 2013 Internship Trends (<http://www.internships.com>). Therefore, this question was critical for examining what efforts were made by curricular and co-curricular departments to ensure and sustain relationships.

Participants were asked this question to measure their outreach efforts for establishing a formal arrangement with employers to provide opportunities for students to study and experience professional career interests outside the institution. While all of the participants noted that they expect employers to provide students with an authentic hands-on work experience that enhances their classroom learning, none of the participants from the curricular or co-curricular departments were able to provide any information on the requirements for employer sites and their levels of readiness/preparedness for interns. The academic department has no established mechanism in place to evaluate the appropriateness of the student-employer match prior to the internship, and relies solely on the student reflection paper to draw conclusions regarding the site.

Research showed that as a best practice, employers that host student interns should have a number of things in place to support the students including an orientation process to provide students with the job expectation, performance evaluation, and organization rules, policies and legal requirements among other things. While the institutional participants could not provide any evidence of these document requirements, the student survey indicated that many of the sites were equipped to support them. Seven out of nine (78%) participants agreed that the internship providers provided orientation to the organization's culture, internship program purpose, rules and policies, and work related performance expectations. Of the nine respondents, six (67%) agreed that the internship provider gave them a clearly written job description of their work duties, responsibilities and measurable performance objectives; worked with them in developing a work plan with assignments and activities; designated work area and resources needed; showed willingness to train, mentor, and coach them all the time; provided sufficient direction/supervision and training, and discussed performance appraisal with them; provided constructive feedback; and made recommendations. Additionally, 89% (8/9) of the participants agreed that the internship provider had coworkers who were friendly and helpful. On the other hand, only 56% (6/9) participants agreed that the internship provider regularly monitored their progress and evaluated their performance.

RQ9: How does the employers' level of readiness for interns meet the institution's expectations?

This question was to study how the curricular and co-curricular departments at the institution ensured readiness of the site employers for interns. It is also important to for the departments to communicate to employers the steps they must take to place an intern.

According to Infographic Internships Survey and 2013 Internship Trends (www.internships.com), only 47% of employers have a structured internship program. Therefore, this question was critical for examining what efforts were made by the departments to inform the host employers of the interns learning expectations, and to determine how the employers were evaluated by the department regarding the ability to host the student interns. Both the administrative and academic participants acknowledged that all academic internships are conducted through the internship coordinator, faculty advisor, or academic department chair. For credit-bearing internship experience, the academic department is responsible for ensuring that the internship sites are suited to meet the student needs and targeted learning outcomes. According to *Employer Internship Guide for On-Campus Internships* (2015) published by the University of Connecticut Center for Career Development, as a best practice, academic departments with internship courses are recommended to do the following:

1. Consider the number of credits student may earn.
2. Make policies very clear to students.
3. Develop a syllabus.
4. Include the Learning Contract.
5. Establish relationships with the employer, initially and continued throughout internship.

6. Familiarize self with legal aspects and speak to employers as needed.

The Mass Media Arts program has only one of the aforementioned recommendations in place—an internship course syllabus. When asked “how do you evaluate the internship employers and the sites regarding their ability to meet your intern expected learning outcomes?” both the academic and administrative participants admitted that this step, although required, is not carried out.

Typically, as a best practice an academic internship should exchange a predetermined number of work hours for course credit (e.g., students accrue one credit for every 45 work hours and three credit hours for 135 work hours). For a three-credit internship, students often work 8-10 hours per week for the course of a semester, approximately 14-16 weeks. While the Mass Media Arts Department’s internship syllabus indicates credit award requirement as a completion of 120 hours of work time to receive 3 hours of academic credits, the student survey showed a major disparity in the work to credit ratio accepted by this semester length program: 33% of the students reported working part-time (under 19 hours), 44% of the students reported working half-time (20-34 hours), and 22% of the students reported working full-time (35 hours or more), yet eight out of nine (78%) participants reported that they received full credit (3 credit hours) for their internship experience. This award system of credit is inconsistent in keeping with national educational practice for credit bearing internships.

RQ10: How does the relationship between the institution and the potential employer impact interns’ placement rates and their employment?

Intern placement rates and employability are the most critical measures of student success and achievement. Based on best practices it is suggested that the institution consider focusing on the selection and approval of internship placement sites/employers; the effectiveness of criteria used to recruit employers; evaluation of the internship employers, the sites and ability to meet intern's expected learning outcomes; employer relationships; employer impact on student learning; performance appraisal and evaluation; and impact student placement rates.

This measure examined whether or not internships turn into a full-time job after graduation. According to the student survey, two out of eight (25%) were offered a full-time job by the organization at the end of internship. However, per NACE, the overall national conversion rate for interns to full-time employee in 2014 was 51%.

According to co-curricular participants, the existing relationships with the recruiters and the strength of that relationship have allowed the institution to place more students. However, the impact of intern placement has not been fully measured. The institution's current placement rate is at 24% compared to the national placement rate of 53% per the NACE (2015) First Destination Survey.

Academic participants were not able to provide the student placement rates for the department and have not assessed the impact of employer relationship and student placement. However, the 2014 Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates administered to the institution's Mass Media Arts graduates indicated that 3 out of 12 (25%) students who responded to the survey were employed full-time (prior internship experience not factored).

Conclusions

This study found that internship program at this institution is a decentralized function distributed in academic departments and career services. The 2013-2014 Career Services Benchmark Survey for Four-Year Colleges and Universities by NACE (2014) found that 88% respondents operated centralized Career Services Center. Research showed that while most students prefer noncentralized college career services, many employers favor a centralized system (Garver, Spralls, & Divine, 2009).

At this institution, the Mass Media Arts Department (curricular) and Career Services (co-curricular) Department do not operate interdependently and are disconnected from each other and from the common purpose of the institution. The academic and co-curricular participants indicated a need to collaborate for an integrated internship program but lacked administrative support and commitment. Participants from both departments indicated that they are attempting to work closely; however, evidence for this effort was not provided to the researcher. Even though the intent of the study was not focused on the studying resources available for internship program, all participants indicated that the quality and success of their operation indirectly depended on their staffing and financial need. They further indicated that due to a lack of staff, it was impossible to realize the full potential of the internship program. All co-curricular participants indicated that with a staff of two individuals in career services, it was challenging to centralize internally, build relationships externally, or develop program pertinent materials.

Although, the success of student internship experience is predicated on connecting academic learning to industry experience and measuring its performance regularly, this process was not fully followed at this institution. Both departments were not assessing the impact of program effectiveness or using data such as placement rates to make informed decisions or improve programs and services. There were no set target goals or expected learning outcomes outlined by either department to achieve and to measure its success routinely. The overall evaluation of this function is limited.

Internships are institutional experience. Academic internships are connected to an academic department which determines if the content of the internship meets its criteria for course credit. A benefit of having an internship that may also be eligible for course credit is the marketability of the position. However, during the participant interviews it was discovered that the Mass Media Arts Department did not regulate the work hours-per-credit ratio for its internships. This was validated by the student survey data that revealed the total hours worked by the interns varied: 33% worked part-time (less than 19 hours); 44% worked half time (20-34 hours); and 22% worked full-time (35 hours or more). The department does not have a policy in place that addresses the ratio of clock hours to credit earned to indicate a minimum number of work hours per credit hour. This award system of credit is in keeping with national educational practice and should be included in course catalogs and other related materials.

An integrated and well-coordinated structure of internship training and placement with oversight and involvement from both the department faculty and co-curricular staff can provide far superior and clear direction to the efforts of the student's holistic

development. However, there is a lack of faculty or supervisor involvement at department level which was evident from the student survey revealing that only 22% of the participants were supervised by an assigned faculty in the department. Connection with campus career services is also critical as it play a significant role in colleges and universities, especially in offering professional student development services and providing co-curricular support to facilitate internships. As a centralized support unit, career services can work more efficiently with all stakeholders, and particularly students. Career services can direct students to the essential resources needed, provide them with exposure to greater placement opportunities, offer timely constructive feedback on performance, as well as assist the academic departments by ensuring student meet the academic requirements to earn credit for their internship experience.

Many institutions have a well-organized and coordinated orientation to evaluation (beginning to end) process to help students meet peers, understand about employer expectations, figure out how to network within the company, learn how frequently previous interns have received employment offers, and much more. Career services can serve as one stop shop by providing outreach services; bring partner organizations on campus, and by regularly communicating with all stakeholders. This office can be instrumental in opening doors for interns and future hires as well as help develop student soft-skills.

Emerging Themes

In today's job market, relevant work experience has never been more important. Institutions placing a large number of students in internship that result in postgraduate

employment are measured favorably by all stakeholders. Academic departments can promote their academic achievement and build on their past performance and future achievements including potential employers. Students who experience success will make more confident workers. It is, therefore, important to offer internship programs for students' academic and personal development and training by providing them with opportunities to experience success, and to make them feel supported. Employers help ensure that interns are ready with the tools they need to enter the workforce. The workforce needs to be ready to accept and accommodate these workers, which is particularly important as graduates enter the competitive labor market.

Program Structure

The Mass Media Arts Department at this institution should carefully design a support structure in which students are provided the opportunity to gain hands-on experience that can be applied to their academic learning objectives in support of their career goals. Such experience can be paid or unpaid but should be monitored and evaluated regularly by professionals at the institution (academic department) and at the workplace. It should provide for student reflection and feedback throughout the learning experience process. Although internships vary widely from organization to organization, the experience can result in a job offer upon graduation. Employers benefit from interns in many ways. While the employer is involved in the on-going training and mentoring of interns, the benefits are many, including getting trained new employees prepared to be hired from the intern pool. It is a proven, cost-effective way to recruit and evaluate potential employees.

Both the Mass Media Arts Department and Career Services Center should consider all the sources of information that influence prospective intern efficacy beliefs to enhance their academic training and proper placement. The Mass Media Arts Department should provide students with ample opportunities to experience academic success, and to let them know that they are supported through a structured internship program that can fulfill their career goals. This will help students who have a high sense of self-efficacy, as well as guide those that need to strengthen their self-efficacy.

During the interviews, both the academic and administrative participants indicated that a strong internship program structure should have a start-to-end approach (freshman to senior year) to student learning, from acquisition to application of knowledge and skills rather than a “bundled” approach at the conclusion of a program of study.

According to best practices in document review, there are institutions that use a similar approach. For example, Delaware Valley College has an Experience 360 Program (E360) that offers two different tracks: (a) Career Exploration Experience and (b) Internships for students to gain academic credit through field-related work experience. In the Career Exploration Experience track, students gain an introduction to or exploration within their discipline-related field. The Internship track is offered for students to develop industry-specific knowledge and gain skills in preparation for a postgraduation opportunity. These two activities are components of Experience 360 Program as outlined in Figure 8. E360 is a mandatory course required of all students for graduation and students have the flexibility to tailor the program to meet their specific goal and interests.

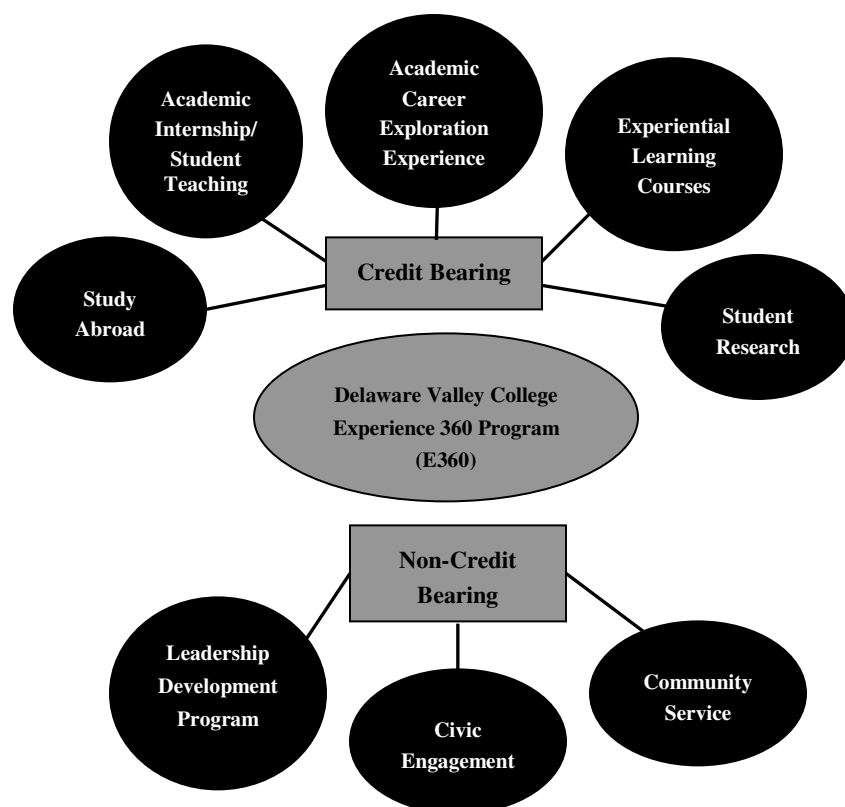


Figure 8. Experience 360 Program (Adapted from Delaware Valley College's Employers' Guide to Student Professional-Educational Experience, 2014)

The Mass Media Arts Department in collaboration with Career Services could consider a program for interns that will allow them to gain industry experience throughout the learning process rather than at the end of their study. The department's current program does not allow students to increase their opportunity for marketability or employability beyond one internship course which is an elective at senior level.

Student Preparation

In addition to providing students with real workplace experience, internships enhance student development and contribute to their intellectual development, professional and personal growth. Students are able to gain experience in public speaking

and voicing opinions to fellow coworkers. They are given the opportunity to observe the work of others and learn from their own job responsibilities. By immersing themselves in their internship, students gain an idea about their future careers and what a particular field looks like along with establishing a network of connections.

Classroom learning and internship learning are intertwined and relatable. However, they are not same. One is “learning to apply” and the other is “apply to learn.” Much of what is learned in the classroom setting can be applied to workplace situations, tasks, and activities. Once students are able to link theory from the classroom to practice in the workplace, they are more likely to be successful in both areas. The academic department faculty and their potential employers must be made aware of this.

Students with internship experience can bring more to the classroom, link the importance of classroom discussions to practice, and demonstrate a significant maturation process that may be lacking in noninterning students. Thus, internships help to create well-rounded students and professionals who enrich both the work environment and the classroom. In addition, before starting an internship, students have preconceived notions of what the field will be like and what character traits will be important to employers. Gaining that experience and workplace exposure allows them to determine what traits and characteristics are actually valuable when it comes to being successful in a job or internship. When these personal, academic, and professional discoveries are made, they give interns the experiences and knowledge they need to succeed in class and at work.

Academic department faculty must pay close attention to student self-efficacy which is a critical factor in their performance during internship. It is believed that what

people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave. High student self-efficacy consistently correlates to positive student behaviors. Students' personal beliefs regarding their ability to achieve influences their performance and impacts in a workplace. Thus, it is important students possess a strong self-efficacy and self-esteem that allows them to help reach their full potential personally and professionally. It is possible that some students will acquire strong self-efficacy through employer mentoring during their internship, while others may do so through classrooms.

Employer Relations

Employers agree that work related internships make a large difference in building employability skills of graduates. Access to internship varies from organization to organization. Many employers offer internship opportunities but have not set a pipeline for interns leading to employability upon graduation. This is simply because little has been done about evaluating the effectiveness of most employability related internship programs. Employers also feel ignored and disregarded by institutions (academic departments) and in many cases they are not involved in the educational process of the graduates. They are hardly provided any feedback from the institution (academic department) regarding student internship experience and the need to improve. There are very few employers who serve on institutional committees and most of them are not involved in either curriculum design or have the opportunity to express their views on developing course content that can benefit workforce needs. Academic departments should work closely with the employers and to engage them to provide learning

opportunities for students with relevant employment skills, competencies and awareness of employer culture.

Some employers are prepared to provide students on-the-job training, and to help with “soft skill” development. They offer assistance through a dedicated website, have a set of protocols including an operating procedures manual to accommodate recruiting and hiring of interns. Employers have also reached out and networked with local institutions to recruit interns on a regular basis through campus career fairs and open houses. Employers looking to employ graduates begin from their own pool of interns. They understand that it is the most cost-effective way to seek out the ones that have trained through relevant work experience. Recruiters of undergraduates also understand that increasing the number of internship students they take on, increases their possibility of hiring them upon graduation. Their strategy is to begin early engagement with the institutions that produces quality graduates based on their experience of intern performance. This is a key to intern recruiters, and getting to students early in their education helps to nurture those students into internship, placement and graduate employment roles in the future.

Program Evaluation

A structure for internship program evaluation and feedback is the most effective process in the success of the program. This process meets the objectives of both the institution and the employer and in fully implementing and utilizing a well-planned structure of the evaluation system. Academic department faculty should take responsibility and ownership to structure evaluation of internship experience as an

integral component of their curriculum. Based on the measurable goals and objectives set at the beginning of internship, the intern should participate in a mid-term and final evaluation. Evaluations should include reflective opportunities for feedback on each partner by each partner—site, academic program, and intern. This will enhance the intern's performance as well as learning experience.

A process of reflection should be deliberate and distinguished from other types of work. It should be intentionally designed and required for the purpose of enhancing an intern's overall learning experience that is separate from daily tasks. Academic programs should require interns to participate in reflection exercises such as journaling and demonstrating theory based projects. The results of reflection should be shared across campus and integrated in academic program planning and curricular improvement. Sites should support interns by providing time for reflection and by assisting with the requirements of reflection projects. An additional role for internship sites should be to help the intern translate and communicate about their experience for the purpose of future job searching. Site supervisors should also mentor and evaluate interns, provide feedback and seek input.

Implications

Outlined in Figure 9, education in postsecondary institutions is an integrative learning approach which involves academic and experiential components of learning that transition acquisition of knowledge to application of skills and is validated through continuous engagement of all stakeholders: the institution, the students, and the site employer.

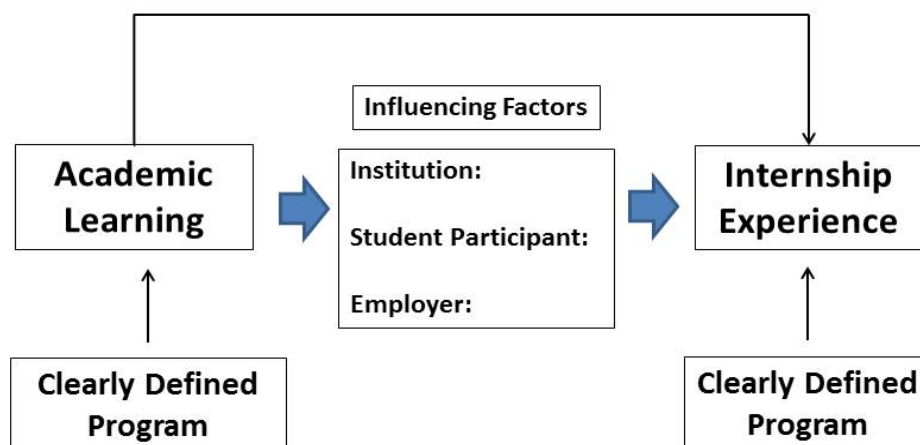


Figure 9. Transforming Learning to Experience

According to Furco (2009), experiential education including service learning in higher education is an integrated approach where students learn in the classroom (curricular) and prepare to apply that learning through student support services (co-curricular) and perform on-the-job through employer as presented in Figure 10.

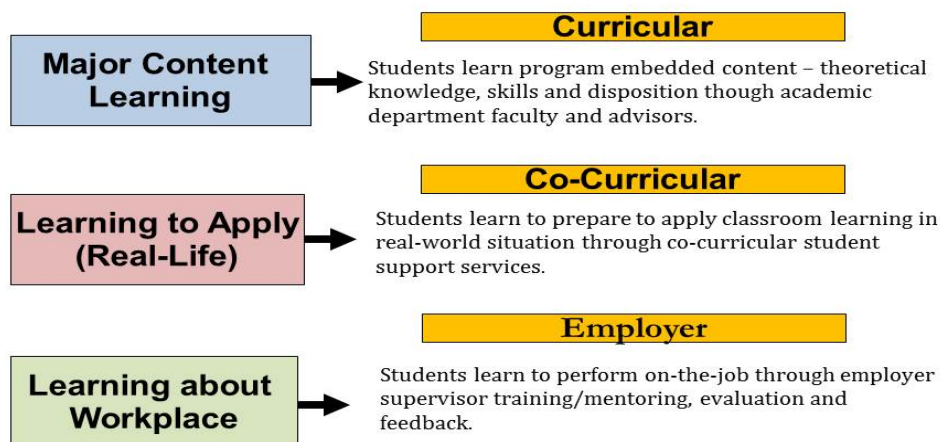
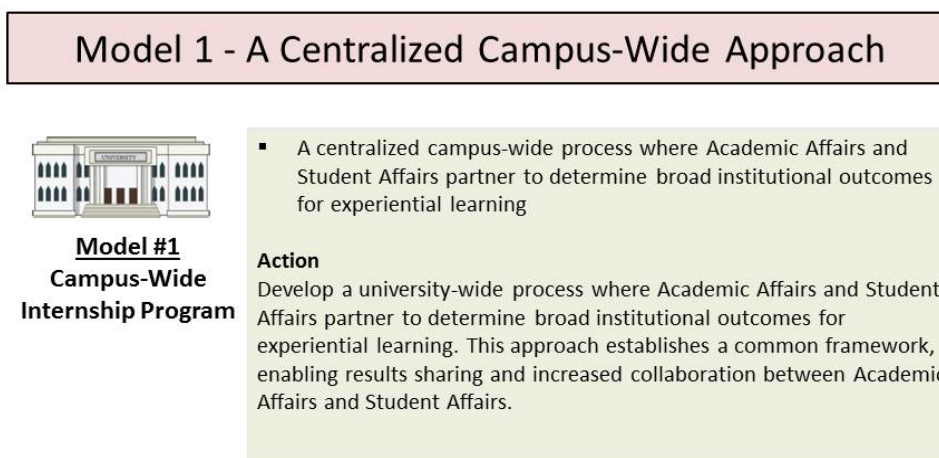


Figure 10. Learning through Student Support Services (Adapted from *Effective Methods for Assessing the Impact of Service-Learning on Students, Institutions, and Communities* by Andrew Furco, 2009)

Internships are becoming increasingly connected to employment in postsecondary institutions. When it comes to internship program administration, most postsecondary institutions fall in one of the following three common categories:

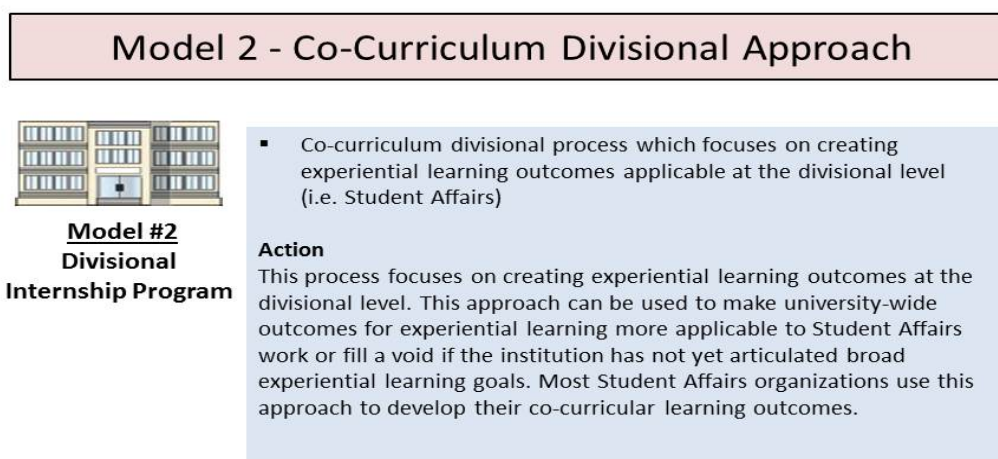
1. A centralized campus-wide process where Academic Affairs and Student Affairs partner to determine broad institutional outcomes for experiential learning. Develop a university-wide process where Academic Affairs and Student Affairs partner to determine broad institutional outcomes for experiential learning. This approach establishes a common framework, enabling results sharing and increased collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. (See Model 1: A Centralized Campus-Wide Approach—Figure 11).



*Figure 11. Centralized Campus-wide Approach (Adapted from *Aligning Co-Curricular Initiatives with Learning Outcomes: Key Challenges Facing Student Affairs Leaders* by the Student Affairs Leadership Council, 2011*

2. Co-curriculum divisional process which focuses on creating experiential learning outcomes applicable at the divisional level (i.e., Student Affairs).

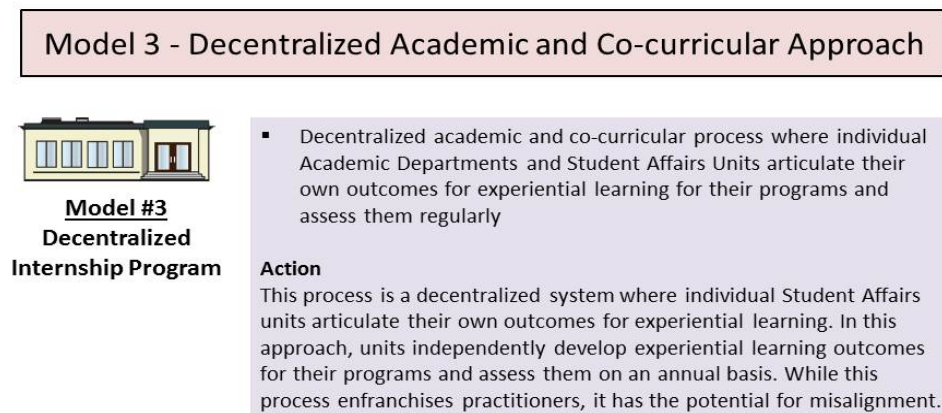
This process focuses on creating experiential learning outcomes at the divisional level. This approach can be used to make university-wide outcomes for experiential learning more applicable to Student Affairs work or fill a void if the institution has not yet articulated broad experiential learning goals. Most Student Affairs organizations use this approach to develop their co-curricular learning outcomes. (See Model 2: Co-Curriculum Divisional Approach—Figure 12).



*Figure 12. Co-Curricular Divisional Approach (Adapted from *Aligning Co-Curricular Initiatives with Learning Outcomes: Key Challenges Facing Student Affairs Leaders* by the Student Affairs Leadership Council, 2011)*

3. Decentralized academic and co-curricular process where individual Academic Departments and Student Affairs Units articulate their own outcomes for

experiential learning for their programs and assess them regularly. This process is a decentralized system where individual Student Affairs units articulate their own outcomes for experiential learning. In this approach, units independently develop experiential learning outcomes for their programs and assess them on an annual basis. While this process enfranchises practitioners, it has the potential for misalignment. (See Model 3 - Decentralized Academic and Co-curricular Approach—Figure 13).



*Figure 13. Decentralized Academic and Co-curricular Approach (Adapted from *Aligning Co-Curricular Initiatives with Learning Outcomes: Key Challenges Facing Student Affairs Leaders* by the Student Affairs Leadership Council, 2011)*

This study has discovered that the internship program operation at this institution is a decentralized academic and co-curricular process where the Department of Mass Media Arts and the Department of Career Services (student affairs) operate independently and articulate their own outcomes for experiential learning for their programs. Based on best practices and literature review, these two departments of the

institution should consider implementing an integrated internship program administration by applying the four emergent themes (structure, student preparation, employer relations, and program evaluation) identified in this study for the benefit of all stakeholders as outlined in Figure 14.

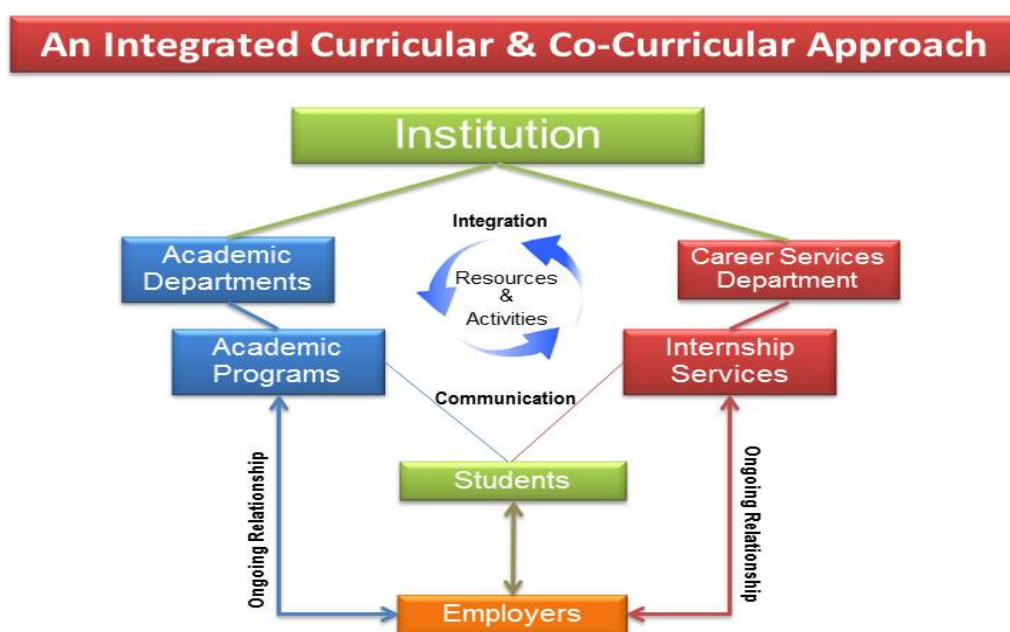


Figure 14. Patel Model of Integrated Curricular and Co-Curricular Internship Program

This integrated model is based on best practices and the findings of this study. Here, the curricula and co-curricular departments work together to coordinate their resources and efforts to successfully place student. Both the academic and administrative units are required to establish and articulate relationships with the employers. On the other end, the employers are expected to host and support the students by first, creating a work-based learning environment in which they can apply and enhance their knowledge and skills, and secondly, provide students with ongoing feedback to during the internship

experience for continuous improvement while on the job. This integrated model allows the institution to meet both the academic and co-curricular goals and improves student preparation and employability. In summary, to be successful, the Department of Mass Media Arts and the department of career services at this institution must implement a centralized approach, and collectively align their efforts with the expectations of the students and the employers. Both the curricular and co-curricular departments must maintain a symbiotic relationship to function effectively and efficiently for the benefit of all parties.

Because the Mass Media Arts industry is a cutting edge field, the department should consider making the elective internship course a required capstone for all students to insure practical training and access to employment. In addition, many of the external best practice industry documents reviewed included definition of experiential learning, provided recommendations for quality internships and a checklist of “top tips,” guidelines, policies, and templates designed to help intern placements and host institutions to manage agreed upon terms of internships. Both departments should take advantage of such abundance of information and materials.

Primarily, the six principles outlined in Table 11 appeared to set the criteria for high-quality internships.

Table 11

Criteria for High-Quality Internships

Principle	Criteria
1 Preparation	Provide clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of employer and intern; ensure the employer has the capacity to accommodate and support the intern
2 Recruitment	Advertise specific duties, work hours required and compensation
3 Orientation	Outline the structure, objectives and values of the organization to the intern
4 Assignment	Assign work related to intern's learning objectives; develops practical skills; and builds professional careers
5 Supervision and Mentoring	Engage the intern in developing their performance objectives; conduct formal review with feedback
6 Reflection and Certification	Provide opportunity for the intern to give feedback to the employer about the quality of their experience

The structural elements of successful internship programs that lead to positive experiences for students and employers require both academic internship programs and internship placement access. Though it is common for students to complete internships without the support of an academic, for-credit program, as a best-practice, internships are considered a partnership between academic institutions, employers, and students. Each has its own objectives, and the partnership's structure has a major impact on how each objective will be met or unmet.

The researcher, in support of this study suggests the following top 10 characteristics of a successful internship program promoted by the Minnesota Association

for Experiential Learning (MAFEL, 2010). These best practices can help the departments at this institution to structure their internship programs in order to align the relationship between the academic programs, the interns, and the site employers.

1. **Plan in advance for success:** Taking a thoughtful approach to intern support will lead to greater success. Academic internship programs should be centrally coordinated and should support students by establishing a learning contract and learning objectives. Employers should have a centrally coordinated internship program with the support of organizational leadership. Employers should define goals in advance of recruiting an intern, and each intern should have a specific position description.
2. **Design substantial, meaningful work assignments:** Interns who know the importance of their work perform better and are able to work more independently on their assignments as well as their learning objectives. Academic programs should help students find internships that are a good match for their course of study and personality. Employers should therefore, explain the importance of work assignments to interns, and every internship should include projects for which the intern has distinct ownership. In addition, the expectations of an internship should match the academic institution's expectation for credits per hour of class and out-of-class time.
3. **Provide a designated workspace and necessary resources:** To be effective in their roles, interns need equipment, supplies and resources to produce high-quality work. When an employer invests in its interns, the result will be higher

quality work, greater achievement of academic objectives, and a better overall experience for the intern. Academic programs should advocate for this investment in interns by internship sites.

4. **Induct and train interns:** Setting clear expectations is the central to any partnership. Academic programs should orient interns to their learning objectives and expectations for completing academic projects based on their experience. Employers should orient interns to their organization and train them in their assignments.
5. **Consider interns part of the team:** Teamwork means everything. Employers should ensure that interns are introduced to all staff, including front-line supervisors, administrative staff and leadership. Interns should be included in staff meetings, employee recognition activities and have the opportunity to collaborate with coworkers, including staff and other interns. Academic programs should advocate for the full integration of interns into organizational life.
6. **Adopt a structure for strong supervision and regular feedback:** Interns can benefit from and expect regular direction and feedback. Employers and academic programs should develop systems for regular communication with interns, so that these important interactions remain a priority.
7. **Practice a structured evaluation process:** Each partner's objectives will be more fully met when a structured evaluation system is used. Based on the objectives established and documented by all three partners—the institution,

student, and employer—at the beginning of internship, should prepare the intern to participate in a mid-term and final evaluation. This will increase performance and enhance the intern's learning experience.

8. **Provide opportunities for professional development:** Internships are a learning experience. Employers should provide access to resources for intern training and professional development, including opportunities to network with professionals from the intern's field. Academic programs should support interns with career-related training.
9. **Require reflection exercises:** Reflection is a process designed to enhance an intern's learning experience. Academic programs should require interns to participate in reflection exercises such as journaling. Employers should support interns by providing time for reflection and by assisting with the requirements of reflection projects. An additional role for employers is to help the intern translate and communicate about their experience for the purpose of future job searching.
10. **Provide closure:** Interns change and grow through their experiences, and an opportunity to close their internships with a culminating experience will enhance learning. Final presentations, exit interviews, and recognition should be provided by both sites and academic programs. (p. 1)

Recommendations

Table 12 recaps the major findings of the study and provides an overview of the researchers drawn conclusions and subsequent recommendations to aid in improving the experiential learning experience (internships) in the Mass Media Arts Department at the case study institution.

Table 12

Major Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The Mass Media Arts Department:		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
1. No standard working definition of internship published at departmental and program level	1. Unable to establish program role, and responsibility as well as curricular relevancy	1. The department should establish a standard unified definition of internship based on best practices and publish it in all pertinent materials
2. No clear purpose or mission of the program defined relevant to academic learning	2. Unable to measure program expected outcomes, success, and effectiveness	2. Identify the program purpose and assessment plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear program objective; academic learning outcomes using industry standards • Develop and implement a structured evaluation process

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

The Mass Media Arts Department:		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
3. Many critical aspects of the current internship program are not aligned with the industry best practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship course not mandatory • Currently an elective 3 credit hour semester length course • Juniors and seniors take the course – but catalog indicates senior status • No work to credit ratio policy • No institutional internship structural requirements imposed on the academic department • Low student participation rate • No academic student learning outcomes established for the internship course • Site supervisors provide intern grade 	3. Difficult for the department to assess the overall impact on experiential learning in the field of study as student participation is relatively rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will only take if self-motivated and find their own placement • Department may not make efforts to place students or recruit employers • Faculty will less likely to engage in bringing industry practices to classroom or monitor inters • Department not driven to improve • Students not aware of learning expectations • Intern may be given a grade not related to academic learning 	3. Redesign and align program structure with industry best practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change course requirements • Develop an operating policies and procedures for internship program • Make internship a mandatory capstone requirement for all students • Market program • Recruit eligible employers • Match and place students • Develop consistent award system of work to credit per hour is in keeping with national educational practices for credit bearing internships • Provide on-going professional development opportunities for all parties

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

The Mass Media Arts Department:		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
4. No organized, formal, and informed process for selecting job sites or employers	4. Department internships are not vetted or matched properly Placement based on student interest and employer reputation	4. Department should use external best practice standards to organize, formalize and communicate policies on employer site selection, matching and placement to students
5. Department has only established one student learning outcome for its internship program, which differs from the ACEJMC required outcomes	5. This can be a concern for meeting accreditation standards especially, design of the program and how it addresses competencies necessary to transition into the marketplace and connects with employer expectations	5. Fully implement ACEJMC standards. Look at other members institutions
6. Lack of student learning outcomes developed to address soft-skills • Current academic program is not designed to support the experience and the competencies necessary for student to transition into the workforce	6. Faculty is not taking advantage to promote industry practices, and engaging students in honing on skill-sets	6. Design program courses to incorporate specific soft-skills appropriate to discipline and industry • Involve employers to review curriculum and serve on department curriculum committee

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

The Mass Media Arts Department:		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish faculty development programs regarding internship best practices.
7. No formal requirements for the host employer (site supervisor) to provide formative feedback during the internship	7. Students miss the opportunity to improve performance	7. Formalize a structured process to effectively evaluate the internship program and provide the type of information needed to improve the overall program structure
8. Department evaluate internship program at course level but there is no mention on how the information gathered is directly used for program/curricula improvements	8. It is difficult to determine any significant impact at the program level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty will not be able to improve instruction 	8. Redesign program evaluation system to incorporate in program development and improvement
9. No formal documents outside of the course syllabus provided to students to guide them through the process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate catalog does not contain pertinent information about internship program requirements 	9. Not having proper procedures guidelines can be confusing and challenging for students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be difficult for students to enroll and follow direction 	9. Develop program handbooks or guidelines, publish and distribute students and employers

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

The Mass Media Arts Department:		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
10. Department has no established mechanism in place to evaluate the appropriateness of the student-employer match prior to the intern	10. This can heavily impact on a student's ability, performance, learning, and self-efficacy. This can affect the authentic hands-on work experience that enhances student's classroom learning.	10. Work with employers to establish formal criteria to measure employer Effectiveness; communicate the process and implement it
• Do not evaluate the internship employers and the sites regarding their ability to meet intern's expected learning outcomes		
11. No student placement rates for the department are available	11. The impact of intern's placement cannot be fully measured or gauged	11. Department should establish standards and protocol to track, collect, and use data to measure progress, improve program and student achievement and success
	• This can make it difficult to make informed decisions and improve program	
	• Can be detrimental to program's value, marketability, employer relations, and student employability	
The Career Services Center:		
12. Services provided by career services are not structured to fully support students for	12. Center is unable to make informed decisions on which employers to invite to campus,	12. Career services should follow NACE and NSEE to create program and service

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

The Career Services Center:		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>successful internship placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career services do not actively seek out students, so while these services are available to all students, many students are not aware of them 	<p>and there is no cross-sharing of data or feedback on internship experiences or placement sites between the departments and the Center</p>	<p>documents and market their services to departments, students, and employers</p>
Mass Media and Career Services Center:		
<p>13. Internship program structure is decentralized in terms of academic and co-curricular student placement services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disconnect between curricular and co-curricular functions. Academic department not utilizing career services as an essential resource to assist with general student training and placement Both departments do not share student or employer data 	<p>13. Career services unable to determine which employers department need to recruit to bring on campus to meet student placement needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career services not able to tailor services provided to enhance curricular related learning-based departmental need Department unable to leverage services provided by career services Department or career services cannot adequately place 	<p>13. Department should immediately collaborate with career services to coordinate general student training and placement assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a venue to collect, share and distribute student and recruiter placement information that informs all parties regularly. Develop records management system utilizing institution's database

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

Mass Media and Career Services Center:		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor record keeping procedures 	<p>students at appropriate internship site or report on the success of student experiential education experience</p>	
14. No information on the requirements for employer sites and their levels of readiness/preparedness for interns	14. This can affect outreach efforts for establishing a formal arrangement with employers to provide opportunities for students to study and experience professional career interests outside the institution	14. Career services and the department should coordinate to prepare information packets for employers that host student interns to include requirements such as orientation process, job expectation, performance evaluation, and organization rules, policies and legal requirements
The Institution		
15. Lack of organized administrative support in the form of human and financial resources	15. Can inhibit effective operations, growth and overall impact and improvement efforts for the program	15. Institution should take a holistic approach to viewing this component of learning. Consider the best practices in staffing and funding these related areas – similar to the admissions model
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of direct supervision of department heads from administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity lost to promote and brand the institution and generate revenue 	

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

The Institution		
Major Finding(s)	Conclusions	Recommendations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance for articulation between these departments • Include in the institution strategic planning and evaluating processes

Consequences and Insights for Further Studies

Future research studies can be focused on topics such as employers confirmation of choice of major with intensification of certain areas of interest, need for development of special skills/qualifications not related to academic field (soft skills), and on estimation of future employment opportunities based on interns experience, performance evaluation and reflective feedback.

Researchers can examine the emerging themes from this study, especially to study the relationship between student development/preparation process and human capital theories. Researchers can also explore the effectiveness of faculty exchange programs with organization where faculty serve as visiting interns with an employer related to their specific discipline as part of their professional development to better prepare classroom and student learning.

This study has discovered that theoretical learning along with practical learning should be a continuous beginning-to-end process to benefit students to explore and reinforce learning and experience appropriate to their field of study. Educators can study

the impact of this process in relation to internships since it is considered as one of the top ten high impact practices for student retention in higher education.

Additional inquiries can be made on the subject of program evaluations and its effectiveness including the inventories that measure true academic learning, engagement and its impact. Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to study what role institutional administrative commitment and resource allocation decisions play in the overall impact of experiential learning.

Summary

This chapter discussed the research questions pertaining to each of the independent variables to identify which undergraduate student internship program structures and components are most effective in experiential learning and benefits successful postgraduation employability of students. Both quantitative and qualitative findings from surveys, semistructured interviews, and document reviews suggest four emergent themes in order to align the curricular and co-curricular departments at the institution, the intern and the employer: (a) program structure, (b) student preparation, (c) employers' relations, and (d) program evaluation.

Quantitatively, this study examined the student interns' experience from their most recent participation in the Mass Media Arts Department internship program.

Qualitatively, this study examined how well the institution's curricular and co-curricular structures aligned internship activities with student preparation and employer readiness structure. The conclusions were drawn by comparing and combining experiences from each of the participating internship students and administrative/academic personnel groups.

Considering that education in postsecondary institutions is an integrative learning approach which involves academic and experiential components of learning that transition acquisition of knowledge to application of skills, and is validated through continuous engagement of all stakeholders. This chapter concludes by identifying the implications of these findings and providing salient recommendations to the academic and administrative units of the institution, as well as recommendations for future studies.

APPENDIX A

Student Internship Experience Survey of Mass Media Arts

Student Internship Experience Survey **For Department of Mass Media Arts**

Participant Consent Form

Primary Investigator: Narendra H. Patel (Doctoral Candidate - Clark Atlanta University)

Title of Study: Undergraduate Internship Program Structures For Effective Post-Graduation Employability: A Case Study Of Mass Media Arts Internship Program

Background Information:

The following sections will be used for research purposes to provide greater understanding of internship program alignment between the institution, the student and the employer. Participation includes answering a series of questions through this online survey and should take approximately ten minutes to complete. There are no known or anticipated risks associated with this research.

Confidentiality:

Your participation in this section is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any penalty. All participants are anonymous. Data collected will be compiled in a confidential manner, be reported only as an entire sample or segment, and may be published in scientific literature or presented at professional meeting using only grouped data.

Contacts and Questions:

For more information, contact the doctoral student researcher Narendra Patel at npatel@cau.edu or the dissertation chair Dr. Trevor Turner at tturner@cau.edu. Questions regarding the protection of human subjects may be addressed to the Clark Atlanta University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects Chair, Dr. Paul I. Musey at (404) 880-6829 or pmusey@cau.edu.

IF YOU WISH TO KEEP A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS, PLEASE PRINT IT NOW BEFORE PROCEEDING.

Consent:

If you agree to participate in the research study, you must "consent to participate" by selecting "I agree to participate in this study". If you do not agree to participate, select "I choose not to participate in this study".

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers.

- ☐ I agree to participate in this study.
- ☐ I chose not to participate in this study.

Internship Participant Information

1. Gender

--Click Here-- ▼
Female
Male

2. What was your academic standing during your internship?

--Click Here-- ▼
First Year
Second Year
Third Year
Fourth Year

3. Classification

--Click Here-- ▼
Freshman
Sophomore
Junior
Senior

4. Cumulative GPA

--Click Here-- ▼
3.5-4.0
3.0-3.49
2.5-2.99
2.0-2.49
Below 2.0

5. What is your concentration in Mass Media Arts

--Click Here-- ▼
Journalism
Public Relations Management
Radio / TV / Film

6. What were your primary reasons for choosing Mass Media Arts as a major: Check All That Apply
 - ☐ Leads to a specific career
 - ☐ Like the field
 - ☐ Pays well
 - ☐ Prestigious job
 - ☐ Job security
 - ☐ Family/Friends/Teacher
 - ☐ Get a permanent full-time job
 - ☐ Other (please specify below)

7. Internship placement site:

--Click Here--
<i>In State</i>
<i>Out of State</i>
8. Internship Salary:

--Click Here--
<i>Paid</i>
<i>Unpaid</i>
9. Internship Credit Options:

--Click Here--
<i>1-15</i>
<i>Non-credit</i>
10. Length of recent internship experience:

--Click Here--
<i>1 Semester</i>
<i>2 Semesters (Fall/Spring)</i>
<i>Summer only</i>
11. Internship work load:

--Click Here--
<i>Full-time (35 hours or more)</i>
<i>Half-time (20-34 hours)</i>
<i>Part-time (under 19 hours)</i>
12. Amount of additional credit hours taken while completing your internship: (Do NOT include your internship credits)

--Click Here--
21
20
19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
13. Prior to this internship have you interned before? ☐ Yes ☐ No

14. If yes, was it with the same employer? ☐ Yes
☐ No

15. Indicate the media sector/career track you interned in:

Advertising
Broadcast Journalism
Communication/Speech Communication/Rhetoric
Consulting/ Education
Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia
Films/TV Studios
Journalism, Mass Communication/Media
Public Relations/Organizational Communications
Public Relations/Image Management
Publishing - Newspaper or Magazines
Photojournalism
Political Communication
Radio or Television Station
Technology/Web
Telecommunications
Other (Please Specify in the box below)

If other, please specify in the box

16. Were you offered a full-time job by the organization you recently interned? ☐ Yes
☐ No

Internship Placement and Support Services Reasons for Your Internship Experience

17. Why did you choose to participate in the internship? Check All That Apply

- ☐ Gain hands on experience in my major area of study
☐ Become better prepared for employment in my field
☐ Gain professional development and personal growth
☐ Learn new skills
☐ Gain a realistic preview of the workplace
☐ Network and make professional contacts
☐ Explore a new organization
☐ Make money
☐ Get a full time/permanent job offer from this company
☐ Fulfill my Curricular or degree requirements
☐ Receive course credit
☐ Fulfill my faculty advisor's strong recommendation
☐ Other (please specify)

Intern Use Of Information Sources For Internships

18. Through which of the following sources did you find your internship? Check One

- ☐ Academic department announcement
- ☐ Academic department advisor/Faculty
- ☐ Campus career/job fairs
- ☐ Campus career center
- ☐ Peer student referral
- ☐ Friends and family recommendations
- ☐ Posting on an internship job board website (internships.com)
- ☐ Social networks (FACEBOOK, LINKEDIN, TWITTER)
- ☐ Employer websites
- ☐ Newspapers
- ☐ Other (Please specify)

Intern Use Of Campus Career Center Services

19. Which campus career center services did you utilize for your internship? Check All That Apply

- ☐ Career Fairs
- ☐ Appointments with staff for cover letter, resume writing and reviewing
- ☐ Practice on interviewing (Mock Interview)
- ☐ On-campus recruiter interviews
- ☐ Job Orientation
- ☐ Information on academic related work experience and employers
- ☐ Job listings
- ☐ Web resources/links
- ☐ Internship placement guidance
- ☐ I did not use the campus Career Services
- ☐ Other (Please Specify)

Intern Match with Internship Employer

20. Were you matched and placed with an internship employer? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, by whom?

Major area department (faculty supervisor/coordinator)
 Campus career services center
 Friend, family/relative
 Campus intern employer recruiter (job/career fair)
 Off-campus intern employer recruiter (job/career fair)
 Third party vendor/agency (state/ national, private/public)
 Temporary talent/staffing agency (local/national)
 Other (please specify)

If you selected
 Other, please
 specify

Internship Program Design For Meeting Student Needs

21. Before beginning your internship which of the following was made available to you and by whom?

	<i>Campus Career Services Center</i>	<i>Mass Media Arts Department Faculty Advisor (Coordinator/ Supervisor)</i>	<i>Host Internship Employer</i>
Clearly written definition of internship program and description of services at the institution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Materials on Internship Program purpose, expected learning objectives and responsibilities of the institution, the employer and the interns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orientation training session, workshop or a course for interns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies and procedures guide or manual for interns to follow before, during and after interning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application process guidelines for interns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application forms for interns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agreement contract for interns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation and feedback form for interns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provision for interns to reflect on and evaluate their experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal information on Workers' compensation for interns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Internship Program Experience - At The Institution

22. Please rate the following statements based on your experience at this institution related to your most recent internship.

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
I had a dedicated internship supervisor (academic coordinator or faculty advisor) at this institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was made aware of the expected learning outcomes for my internship experience (i.e. knowledge, skills, and attitude that I should gain from my experience)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My internship supervisor established and communicated clear expectations of my work responsibilities with my employer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My internship supervisor worked with my employer and provided close oversight throughout my internship experience (before, during and after)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had a clear understanding of all the requirements that I must meet to earn internship course credits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My internship supervisor regularly monitored and evaluated my performance and provided constructive feedback on my progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My internship supervisor provided me the opportunity to evaluate my experience and present it to my department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My internship was mandatory requirement for my major/degree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Even if my internship was not mandatory I would have preferred to do one	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All my learning expectations were met during my most recent internship experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All my internship placement needs were fully met at this institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Internship Program Experience - At Host Employer Site

23. Please rate the following statements based on your experience with the internship provider related to your most recent internship.

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Provided orientation to the organization's culture, internship program purpose, rules and policies, and work related performance expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gave me a clearly written job description of my work duties, responsibilities and measurable performance objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clearly communicated expected learning outcomes to enrich my job training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worked with me in developing a work plan with assignments and activities specific to my area of study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Designated work area and resources needed to do my job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Showed willingness to train, mentor and coach me all the time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provided sufficient direction/supervision and training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regularly monitored my progress and evaluated my performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discussed my performance appraisal with me, provided constructive feedback and made recommendations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provided professional work environment and encouraged my ideas and input on several occasions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Had co-workers who were friendly and helpful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hosted site visits for my faculty supervisor during the work term	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appreciated and recognized my good performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Internship Program Experience - Student Preparation

24. Please rate the following statements based on your most recent internship experience.

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
I felt confident in my ability to connect academic subject matter to a "real world" experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt confident in my ability to excel in my professional work environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The courses I took prior to my interning properly prepared me for the internship experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have acquired knowledge beneficial to my current study that has enhanced what I was taught in the classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a better understanding of how to apply the knowledge and skills gained through my academic courses and classroom preparations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a better understanding of professional work environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have learned more about career options in my field of study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This experience has prepared me for my career goals and actual job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After my internship I feel confident I can attain a full-time position in this or similar organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall my preparation for this internship positively impacted my performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would recommend internship experience to other students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Please describe which aspect of your overall internship experience was the most valuable and rewarding to you:

--

Thank you for your participation.

If you have questions regarding this study, contact the doctoral student researcher Narendra Patel at npatel@cau.edu

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol and Transcription

Research Title: Undergraduate Internship Program Structures For Effective Postgraduation Employability: A Case Study of the Mass Media Arts Internship Program

Scripted Interview Protocol:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Notes for interviewee: Introductions and Preliminaries:

Interviewee:

I am pursuing my doctorate degree in Educational Leadership in the School of Education at Clark Atlanta University. As a part of my dissertation research on Undergraduate Internship Program Structures for Effective Postgraduation Employability, I am conducting a personal interview with experts on the topic of my research study. Because of your background in the area of undergraduate internship program, I believe your input will be valuable to this research and in helping grow our professional best practices in student intern placement.

The length of this semistructured interview will be approximate 40-50 minutes. There are seven key questions and other questions may be added as they arise during the interview. Your responses to these questions will remain confidential. No names or addresses will be used, only aggregate results of this research will be disseminated. For the purpose of validity, reliability and member check, this session will be recorded and later transcribed. A final copy of the transcript will be presented to you for your review and give you the opportunity to make any additions or deletions before approval.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You will receive no compensation for your participation and you will not be responsible for any costs to participate in this study. You are free to participate in the study or withdraw your consent at any time during the study. Your withdrawal or lack of participation will not affect any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The researcher reserves the right to remove you without your consent at such time that they feel it is in the best interest.

Thank you for your participation.

Purpose of research:

Work-based experiential learning opportunities such as internships and co-ops are important and effective practices in postsecondary education. Since they enable college students to apply hands-on academic knowledge, competencies and practical skills to the real work environment and transit to future employment, the topic of our discussion will be the state of internship program alignment at this institution in relation to its curricular and co-curricular programs, student intern preparedness and intern employer readiness.

Introduction and Preliminaries

- A. Briefly describe your title, your role (responsibilities) at this institution.
- B. How long have you been in this role?
- C. What are your connections and responsibilities to student internship program?

Interview Questions

Relationship between Internship Program and the Institution

1. What is the working **definition** of “internship” at this institution?
 - ☐ How does this institution define internship?
 - ☐ How does your department/unit define internship?
 - ☐ What do you believe is the functional mission of your Internship Program?
2. Briefly describe **Internship Program structure** at this institution (e.g., its organization, operation and program/unit structure).
 - ☐ How is the program/unit organized (centralized or decentralized) within the institution?
 - ☐ How is the institution committed to the function and value of the internship program?
 - ☐ How closely is the internship experience linked to the goals of the institution and its program, the student, and the employer?
 - ☐ What are the institution’s specific plans for assisting Internship Program in positioning itself to achieve its stated goals?
 - ☐ What expected student learning outcomes are established for the internship program by the institution (provide a copy)? How are all stakeholders (the institution, the students, and the employers) made aware of them?
 - ☐ How successful has this program been in attaining its function for all stakeholders (the institution, the student and the employer) of the institution?
 - ☐ How are your current practices informed or guided by any standards or regulations?
 - ☐ Which organizations/agencies are you affiliated with? How are you using them?
 - ☐ Is there a written department/unit plan and set policies for administration of the internship program at this institution? Please explain and provide copies if available.
 - ☐ What stands out as Internship Program’s unique role and value to this institution?
 - ☐ Do you see Internship Program and this institution a win-win situation? And why?

3. Briefly describe the **relationship of internship program between academic and co-curricular units** of this institution?
 - ☐ How are the internship program processes designed to benefit students learning and employer demands?
 - ☐ What guidelines are considered when making decisions regarding for internship program functionality?
 - ☐ Can academic and co-curricular units of the institution take significant actions regarding internship program planning without consulting each other or administration?
 - ☐ In your opinion, is the institution's administration committed to shared relationship between academic and co-curricular units for internships?
4. Describe how **academic programs are designed to prepare interns for on-the-job** requirements and employer expectations?
 - ☐ What are the expected learning outcomes of academic internship program?
 - ☐ How are they assessed and by whom? How are the results used?
 - ☐ How are your expected learning outcomes aligned with your employer's expectations?
 - ☐ How are interns informed of the expected academic learning outcomes they should gain from their internship experience (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitude)?
 - ☐ How are interns provided opportunities for reflecting on and evaluating their internship experience?
 - ☐ How are academic courses designed to prepare interns prior to interning?
 - ☐ How is internship supervision provided by a faculty advisor or coordinator for oversight in placement and evaluation of students' site and overall experience? What are their major responsibilities (provide copies of job description)
5. Briefly describe what steps you take for **preparing, matching and placing interns** with employers.
 - ☐ What measures do you take to inform interns regarding site employers' work expectations?
 - ☐ What support structure do you expect employers have in place for intern's to achieve their learning outcomes (i.e. mentorship, academic specific work assignment, orientation and training, etc.)?
 - ☐ How do you ensure that the institutional/program student expected learning outcomes aligned with employers expectations?
 - ☐ How is the institutional internship program evaluated for its effectiveness?

Relationship between Internship Program and the Employer

6. Briefly describe the **guidelines you use** for employer participation and effective affiliation
 - ☐ How do you select and approve internship placement sites/employers?
 - ☐ What criteria do you use to recruit employers? How effective are they?
 - ☐ How do you evaluate the internship employers and the sites regarding their ability to meet the intern's expected learning outcomes? What is the process and how often do you review it?
 - ☐ How many established relationships do you have? How do you establish or build relationship with employers for internships? How do you continue the relationship?
 - ☐ How do you inform internship site employers of the expected student learning outcomes?
 - ☐ How do employer impact student learning while students are interning?
 - ☐ What type of performance appraisal do employers use for intern evaluation on the job site?
 - ☐ How your existing relationships impact student placement rates? (reoccurring placement or permanent job offers)

Challenges for Internship Program and the Institution

7. What institutional or programmatic issues or challenges do you see facing your internship program?
- ☐ In what ways has your unit/department tried to address them? Can you give an example of a strategy to demonstrate that?
 - ☐ Where do you see your internship program department/unit need most improvement? What specific changes in the institutional or program policy or structure will be necessary?
 - ☐ Is there anything else you would like to share about your internship program that I have not specifically addressed?

Closure

Thank you for taking this interview with me today. I want to assure you that the information you have provided will remain confidential.

If necessary would it be okay to have a follow-up interview with you?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

APPENDIX C

Categorical Concepts and Reoccurring Patterns

Categorical Concepts	Examples of Reoccurring Patterns from Interview Participant Comments
Organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would be nice to have like a separate office that's solely focuses on internships. 2. Could be under one umbrella to give one direction to the students. 3. Internship coordinators from academic departments housed in career services could give students one strong centralized coordinated service to prepare for experiential learning. 4. Some departments have internship coordinators who do not work with career services or Relinquish their placement records and data in one centralized location. 5. There are no faculty liaisons between students and employers, faculty do not have working roster or files of placement opportunities they can share with the students. 6. Placement numbers would be better if it could be more centralized. 7. Centralized within the academic department with an intern coordinator or internship instructor of record but not at school level.
Value	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. branding 2. visibility 3. helps with retention 4. impacts recruitment 5. selling point for recruitment 6. quality of students that have been recruited and hired
Administrative Commitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. stronger commitment of resources 2. invest in the department 3. moving internship coordinators house within career services 4. more responses from department chairs and faculty 5. more professors willing to see students outside the classroom and engage students in social activities 6. support staff is critical and needed
Collaboration/ Involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. more exchange of our faculty spending some time in the industry and then experts in the industry doing same things in our classrooms whether its teaching or coming to provide seminars 2. need career services and academic faculty to work closely 3. work very close with academic departments

Categorical Concepts	Examples of Reoccurring Patterns from Interview Participant Comments
Course Design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. need advisory council comprised of corporate and agency entities 5. make faculty part of a process in preparing the students for placement 6. professional training for staff
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The university needs to take a look at the structure of the curriculum programs; we have some work to do to keep pace with the changing technologies 2. should be across the board in all curriculum areas that we do have some type of career component built into our curriculum 3. The university mandates that before internship students take internship class or seminar that we can sign off on
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. need to merge some of the programming into the academic components 5. introduce a career guidance course 6. need to look at external standards, academic department's perspective 7. involve in professional organizations to learn best practice 8. there should be internship credit work assignment policy
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. enhance skill-sets, soft skills, competencies or computer skills of students outside the classroom to meet industry standards 2. early introduction to career choices, develop and enhance skill sets needed for the workplace
Skill-Sets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. we look for experiences and the competencies necessary to transition into the marketplace
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. career services engage to improve soft skills or wherever the gaps may be
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. interns are informed on skills by site employer that takes in the student
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. employers look for students that have skills-sets
Guidance/Advising	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. expose students to those types of critical workplace skills that employers are looking for them to have
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. look at how students are prepared to go into the internship through orientation process 2. students are served better if they work through academic departments first, going through the orientation process and work with career services to find the right kind of placement so that it is relevant and can be evaluated effectively
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. talk about their personal objectives, give an overview, how it is connected to their major
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. talk to those persons who provided the internship experience and they let us know about the market changes
Reflection On Experience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. talk to our alumni who tell us what we need more of, what is critical or most important
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. substitute teacher - visit classroom to prepare students for discipline
Reflection On Experience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. student assess their learning, to understand their work experience, reflect on their goals, provide evidence of what they learned and then they have to show how need to document growth

Categorical Concepts	Examples of Reoccurring Patterns from Interview Participant Comments
Participation/ Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. students came back and share experience 3. students and recent alumni come back and share their experiences to students 4. discovery session and interviews with students about their experiences based on student's impression and employer's perspective 5. student tell us they maintain contact usually with the persons who written them letters of recommendation 6. understanding the career that they're choosing and also get that practical experience in that career
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. make certain internship will provide a true academic experience or a real life experience 2. students need to understand the academic department process require of all students - it is just best practices for undergraduate training 3. mandated that students participate in an internship program 4. mandate that students must participate 5. mandate for the internship program across the board 6. make internship mandatory requirement
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recruiters look for students ready to transition, soft skills, GPA 2. recruiter criteria – Undergraduate, GPA, major, junior, community service etc. once they meet criteria, soft skills 3. they understand going in, what competencies are expected, employer's expectations 4. students are matched based on interests, GPA and other eligibility requirements 5. we prepare students properly for recruiters who are always looking for the best and the brightest 6. understand academic major expectations
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. work with corporations to determine what their qualifications are 2. more coordinated effort would be better for all parties involved 3. talk to employers we have alliances with companies 4. employers need to understand what our curriculum preparation is like and the information needs to flow both ways and like-wise 5. explain employers how and why our students are trained in various disciplines 6. engage employers after the experience from the academic side or during the experience
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. more involvement from recruiters who want to come to university, participate in a program they know is already established and works 2. need to do a better job to extend the relationships with places we haven't sent students before but they're related to what students are being prepared to do 3. we have some, where we actually try to cultivate a relationship or a partnership
Intern Criteria	
Support/Connection	
Campus Visit	

Categorical Concepts	Examples of Reoccurring Patterns from Interview Participant Comments
Engagement/Input	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. employers come to us once a year, they tell us what they do, need, they meet with students, sit with students, give them the opportunity to talk, answer any questions 3. do campus tours 6. conversations, formal contact, on campus visit, and at a workshop or a conference
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. employers come to us once a year, they tell us what they do, need, they meet with students, sit with students, give them the opportunity to talk, answer any questions 2. send curriculum to the employers ask what they think 3. get feedback from the company
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. employer review the learning outcomes as students are setting up for that particular academic semester 5. employer feedback to better prepare students 6. we want them to tell us exactly what they need so we can guide the student into the right direction to make sure that it's a good fit
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. strong university's relationship between the internship program and the employer 2. we look at the longevity of the company, how long they've been in business 3. some companies that wanted to hire students but we felt they weren't as reputable 4. high caliber of a company 5. sites have evaluation process we utilize
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. institutional internship placement data are requested from career center, department do not share or have data available 2. evaluate them at the end and take that data to determine if it's a good fit for the student 3. coordinators do not share or report data on student placements to institution 4. the hiring companies can also tell us whether academics or teaching the students is what they need 5. we gather data from the employer, need to figure out a way to share data 6. need some baseline data to determine if fit good or need to enhance it
Data/Information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. we tell students the learning outcomes that are expected and they're in concert with the skill-sets that are expected in the industry 2. we sit down and discuss with the student who writes the learning outcomes out share with their manager or supervisor signs off on them 3. employer review the learning outcomes as students are setting up for that particular academic semester 4. outcomes may not fulfill within a context of a single internship 5. every department doesn't have outcomes cemented yet 6. we want to know about the learning outcomes
Learning Outcomes	

Categorical Concepts	Examples of Reoccurring Patterns from Interview Participant Comments
Feedback	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. based on site employer feedback we let academic departments know what employers are looking for that will make student more marketable and their potential for hire go up 2. feedback is given both to the students as well as to the instructions 3. give supervisor evaluation, fill out an evaluation where they give the students feedback, suggest a grade based off a scale that's provided to them by the department 4. feedback from organizations to understand what the industry is looking for and whether or not we're preparing for those particular skill-set 5. contact companies to seek what the student has learned or what the feedback is from the student evaluation at the end of the year 6. do not have in place a way for the students to give us feedback about their experiences
Assessment Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. evaluation process to measure learning outcomes experiences and share findings with the academic departments 2. advise as part of evaluation process 3. sites have evaluation process we utilize 4. evaluation process is to get feedback from the student 5. no formal evaluation process 6. included in the process students are expected to develop a set of learning outcomes in assistance
Tracking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. tracking student stay engaged 2. track where interns are placed 3. track students' progress in the organization 4. total program effectiveness not fully in place need to do that 5. follow-up after completion of the internship 6. after the internship is complete no follow-up to determine if this is a good site

APPENDIX D

Document Review and Analysis

Terms	Industry Standards (NACE/NSEE/CEIA/CAS) What is Included	Massachusetts Community Colleges Handbook	SHRM	Case Study Institution
Definitions of Experiential Education Internship/Co-op Opportunities	MISSION/PURPOSE/FUNCTION PROGRAM GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES	✓	✓	
<u>Planning</u> A careful and thoughtful process of planning is required of all stakeholders: the institution, the student, and the site employer. Each party must consider certain common steps, based on their individual campus situation or programs of study, prior to implementing the internship or co-op.	Timeline	✓	✓	
	National & International Student Eligibility (Academic & Non-academic)	✓		
	Site Selection/Approval	✓		
	Hours Per Credit Requirement	✓		✓
	Learning Outcomes, Objectives, and Activities, and Civic, Organizational, and Career Competencies	✓		✓
	Assessment & Reflection (Student Learning Outcomes, Program Effectiveness, Advisory Committees)	✓		✓
	Program Certification(NSEE & CEIA)	✓		
<u>Implementation & Program Administration Responsibilities</u> Each party must assume appropriate responsibilities and act accordingly to ensure that the student's internship or co-op experience fulfills the stated mission and goals of the program.	STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:			
	Pre-Internship or Co-op	✓	✓	✓
	Accepting a Position	✓		
	Legal Compliance	✓		✓
	Academic Requirements	✓		
	Setting Learning Objectives/Outcomes	✓		✓
	Mid-term Progress Report	✓		
	Issues at the Worksite	✓		
	Final Evaluations	✓		✓
	FACULTY ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES:			
	Pre-Internship or Co-op	✓		
	Academic Requirements	✓		
	During the Internship or Co-op	✓		
	Academic Assignments & Oversight	✓		
	Setting Learning Objectives/Outcomes	✓		
	Mid-term Progress Report	✓		
	Grading for Award of Credit	✓		
	Issues at the Worksite	✓		
	Final Evaluations	✓		
	SITE SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES:			
	Pre-Internship or Co-op	✓		
	Position Description	✓	✓	
	During the Internship or Co-op	✓		
	Approval of Learning Objectives Mentoring,	✓	✓	✓
	Supervision, & Training	✓		
	Mid-term Progress Report	✓		

Terms	Industry Standards (NACE/NSEE/CEIA/CAS) What is Included	Massachusetts Community Colleges Handbook	SHRM	Case Study Institution
	Issues at the Worksite	✓	✓	
	Final Evaluations	✓		
	COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:			
	Program Administration	✓		
	Program Marketing	✓		
	Institutional Coordination	✓		
	Student Development and Placement	✓		
	Faculty Development	✓		
	Employer Relations	✓		
	Records Management	✓		
	Recognition	✓		
<u>Legal Advisories</u> To maintain effective internship or co-op placements that meet with federal, state and regional regulatory compliance, practitioners and administrators are recommended to consider the mandated guidelines for the institution, the student, and the site employer.	PRE-SCREENING, BACKGROUND CHECKS, AND ELIGIBILITY, ADVISEMENT:			
	International Students	✓		
	Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Optional	✓		
	Practical Training (OPT)	✓		
	Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI)	✓		
	Sexual Offender Registry Information (SORI)	✓		
	LIABILITY, RISK CONSENT, POLICIES & RECORDS MANAGEMENT:			
	Approved Legal Documents	✓		
	Records Management	✓		
	Liability Insurance Requests (<i>Student & Practitioner</i>)	✓		
	FERPA & FLSA, EEOC Standards	✓		
Resources - Sample Forms Regular Communication Internship Agreements	Student Preparation Timeline Table	✓		
	Internships & Co-ops: Liability and Risk Consent			
	Legal Documents – Administrative Guidelines	✓		
	Internship/Co-op Agreement	✓	✓	✓
	Internship/Co-op Acknowledgment of Risk and Consent			
	Student Internship/Co-op Checklist	✓		
	Internship/Co-op Course Syllabus	✓		✓
	Site Supervisor Evaluation of Student Progress	✓	✓	✓
	Student Self-Evaluation	✓		
	Student Evaluation of Internship/Co-op Site			
	Student	✓	✓	
	Host Site Evaluation of Internship/Co-op Program	✓	✓	
	Student Evaluation of Internship/Co-op Program	✓	✓	
	Sample Learning Outcomes & Objectives	✓	✓	
	Student Application for Internship		✓	
	Student Letter of Reference		✓	
	Organization Position Requirement Form		✓	
	Internship Position Description Form		✓	
	Internship Agreement of Responsibilities - Student Intern; Organization; Faculty Coordinator			
	Model Internship Program/ Internship Agreement - This letter of agreement confirms the responsibilities of the organization, the student intern and the faculty coordinator in the internship, the beginning and ending dates of the internship, and the due dates for the performance evaluations. This agreement is provided to the company prior to the student reporting to the organization		✓	

Terms	Industry Standards (NACE/NSEE/CEIA/CAS) What is Included	Massachusetts Community Colleges Handbook	SHRM	Case Study Institution
	Organization Evaluation Form - Rating of Organization Characteristics - Students may use this form to evaluate their internship experience		✓	
	Intern Evaluation Form - Rating of Intern Characteristics/ Performance Assessment		✓	
	Website	✓	✓	✓
	Orientation Session/Checklist	✓	✓	

APPENDIX E

Preliminary Survey Focus Group Script

I am Narendra Patel, pursuing my doctorate degree in Educational Leadership in the School of Education at Clark Atlanta University. As a part of my dissertation research on Undergraduate Internship Program Structures for Effective Postgraduation Employability, I am conducting a survey of student interns to better understand your experiences as you have been engaged in the internship program in your major during your time at this institution. My interest is to learn more about your experiences throughout this process and how these experiences have affected your learning, and how they have impacted you as a person. This online survey is expected to take about **ten minutes** of your time. Because of your experience in undergraduate internship program, I believe your input will be valuable to this research and in helping grow our professional best practices in student intern placement.

I want to assure you that your names will not be disclosed or identified in later reports. I am also interested in getting your written comments. No individual names will in any way be connected to the comments you provide in this survey.

To assure accurate representation and reporting of your responses later on, I will use aggregate results from participants of this survey. Please let me know if there is anything that you feel I have missed on this instrument or final comments you would like to add? In case after you have completed the survey if you have any additional thoughts or questions about the instrument, please feel free to email me at npatel@cau.edu. Thank you for taking the time to complete the Student Internship Experience Survey.

Informed Consent

The informed consent statement will be placed before the research questions in the Student Internship Experience Survey for Department of Mass Media Arts (see attachment at the end of the IRB protocol submission). The Student Internship Experience Survey content will be listed first, followed by the research survey instrument.

The following sections will be used for research purposes to provide greater understanding of internship program alignment between the institution, the student and the employer. Participation includes answering a series of questions through this online survey and should take approximately ten minutes to complete. There are no known or anticipated risks associated with this research.

Your participation in this section is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without any penalty. All participants are anonymous. Data collected will be compiled in a confidential manner, be reported only as an entire sample or segment, and may be published in scientific literature or presented at professional meeting using only grouped data.

For more information, contact the doctoral student researcher Narendra Patel at npatel@cau.edu or the dissertation chair Dr. Trevor Turner at tturner@cau.edu. Questions regarding the protection of human subjects may be addressed to the Clark Atlanta University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects Chair, Dr. Paul I. Musey at (404) 880-6829 or pmusey@cau.edu.

By completing the questions, you are providing your consent to participate in the study.

APPENDIX F

Invitation Letter to Administrators to Participate in Study

Dear Administrator:

I am Narendra Patel, pursuing my doctorate degree in Educational Leadership in the School of Education at Clark Atlanta University. As a part of my dissertation research on Undergraduate Internship Program Structures for Effective Postgraduation Employability, I am inviting you as a subject matter expert on my research topic to participate in this study. Your participation in this study will be in a semistructured interview format and should be no more than 50 minutes. This is a mixed method (quantitative and qualitative) study and is under the direction of Dr. Trevor Turner, Chair of my dissertation committee and Professor of Educational Leadership in the Department of Educational Leadership in the School of Education.

I am hoping to complete data collection by February 15, 2015, so I am flexible with your time and convenience. Time commitment and other requirements are outlined in the official IRB consent form I have attached with this letter for your review. I will contact you by phone or email to set a date and time that is conducive to all to do the interviews and to collect copies of any document about your internship program's functional definition statements, goals and objectives, guidebooks and manuals, brochures, and other documents that you are willing to share.

I also want to assure you that there are no known or anticipated risks associated with this research. No individual name will in any way be connected to the comments you provide during the interview. Your name will not be disclosed or identified in later reports. To assure accurate representation and reporting of your responses later on, I will use coded and aggregate results from participants of this study. Because of your experience in undergraduate internship program, I believe your input will be valuable to this research and in helping grow our professional best practices in student intern placement.

If you have any additional questions about this invitation, please feel free to email me at npatel@cau.edu. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Narendra H. Patel
Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership and Administration
Clark Atlanta University
404-880-8064

APPENDIX G

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Consent Letter

I _____ understand that I am invited to participate in a dissertation research project which will be conducted as part of the requirements for graduation for the doctorate of education program at Clark Atlanta University's Department of Educational Leadership. This study will be conducted under the direction of Dr. Trevor Turner, Chair of the Dissertation Committee in the Department of Educational Leadership, School of Education.

The title and purpose of the study are as follows:

Title: Undergraduate Internship Program Structures for Effective Postgraduation Employability: A Case Study of the Mass Media Arts Internship Program.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to investigate the collaborative relationship between an academic department (undergraduate Mass Media Arts), its participating interns and its industry employers at the case study institution in order to develop a new model program for implementation across institutions of higher learning that can be used to effectively place college interns in experiential education to jump-start their successful transition to the workplace as well as managing their career effectively thereafter.

By signing this consent form I _____ am agreeing to the following:

1. To participating in a semistructured interview with the investigator. **This interview is expected to last approximately 30-40 minutes;** will be audio-taped and later transcribed.
2. Allow the investigator to obtain necessary non-confidential documents such as program's functional definition statements, goals and objectives, guidebooks and manuals, brochures, and other documents that will allow the researcher to answer questions pertaining to the study. **Providing access to these documents should take approximately 30 minutes.**
3. Although pseudonyms will be used in the study and participants will **not** be identified, I am also agreeing to my rights to review the research study analysis and documents for verification of any direct quotes the investigator might use in the study analysis and report should I so desire. **This review should be approximately 30 minutes.**
4. Assisting the investigator with arrangements for an interview with a representative designee from my institution, if necessary. This representative can be the President, Provost, School Dean, Department Chair, any Vice President, or any other member of the administrative team who is a subject matter expert willing to participate in the study and is capable of giving his/her insights about the internship program. Note: **Only sections 1 & 3 will apply** to the representative from my institution.

I am aware that there are no known risks anticipated from my participation in this study. However, the following precautionary procedures will be taken to ensure confidentiality: (1) The final report for the study will use pseudonyms for my name and that of my institution; (2) Generic descriptions will be used to identify the location of my institution (e.g. Private University located in an urban southeastern state); (3) The audiotape with the interview responses will be stored in a locked filing cabinet accessible only to the

researcher. After the acceptance of the final report by the research committee, the audiotape will be retained for a length of **three years** and destroyed thereafter. **I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed. I will receive no compensation for my participation and I will not be responsible for any costs to participate in this study.**

I understand that the objective of the study is to effectively align institutional internship program structure between the institution, the student, and the employer in order to prepare students to successfully transition to employment upon graduation. This study will benefit me and my unit with pertinent information faced by institutions of higher education regarding academic-based experiential preparation of its graduates to meet the changing demands of the employers and that of today's workforce. It will provide educational institutions and the industry with integrated best practices in placing interns for experiential learning that result in ultimate hiring. **I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.**

I also understand that the investigator will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time should I become uncomfortable with it.

Narendra H. Patel

Name of Researcher

Contact: 404-880-8064; npatel@cau.edu

Signature

Date

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher. (Signatures will be obtained by the researcher on campus in person)

For additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to the Clark Atlanta University Institutional Review Board Chair, Dr. Paul I. Musey at (404) 880-6829 or pmusey@cau.edu.

APPENDIX H

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter



CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board
Office of Sponsored Programs

February 8, 2015

Mr. Narendra H. Patel <npatel@cau.edu>
Office of Planning,
Assessment and Research,
Clark Atlanta University,
Atlanta, GA 30314.

RE: Undergraduate Internship Program Structures For Effective Post-Graduation
Employability: A Case Study Of Mass Media Arts Internship Program.

Principal Investigator(s): Narendra H. Patel

Human Subjects Code Number: HR2015-1-563-1

Dear Mr. Patel:

The Human Subjects Committee of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your protocol and approved of it as exempt in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1ii).

Your Protocol Extended Approval Code is HR2015-1-563-1/A

Type of Review: Expedited.

This permit will expire on February 7, 2016. Thereafter, continued approval is contingent upon the annual submission of a renewal form to this office.

The CAU IRB acknowledges your timely completion of the CITI IRB Training in Protection of Human Subjects – "Social and Behavioral Sciences Track". Your certification is valid for two years.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Georgianna Bolden at the Office of Sponsored Programs (404) 880-6979 or Dr. Paul I. Musey, (404) 880-6829.

Sincerely:

Paul I. Musey, Ph.D.
Chair
IRB: Human Subjects Committee

cc. Office of Sponsored Programs, "Dr. Georgianna Bolden" <gbolden@cau.edu>

223 James P. Brawley Drive, S.W. * ATLANTA, GA 30314-4391 * (404) 880-8000

Formed in 1988 by consolidation of Atlanta University, 1865 and Clark College, 1869

APPENDIX I

Student Internship Survey Summary Report, Spring 2015



Primary Investigator: Narendra H. Patel (Doctoral Candidate - Clark Atlanta University)

Title of Study: Undergraduate Internship Program Structures For Effective Post-Graduation Employability: A Case Study Of Mass Media Arts Internship Program

Background Information:

The following sections will be used for research purposes to provide greater understanding of internship program alignment between the institution, the student and the employer. Participation includes answering a series of questions through this online survey and should take approximately ten minutes to complete. There are no known or anticipated risks associated with this research.

Student Internship Survey

Summary Report

Spring 2015

This survey is a routine survey, and conducted in February 2015 using software Snap. Total number of recipients is 50. Total number of responses is 9. The overall response rate is 18%.

Internship Participant Information

1. Gender

Counts	Analysis %	Respondents
Base	9	100.0%
Gender		
Female	8	88.9%
Male	1	11.1%

2. What was your academic standing during your internship?

Counts	Analysis %	Respondents
Base	9	100.0%
What was your academic standing during your internship?		
First Year	-	-
Second Year	1	11.1%
Third Year	4	44.4%
Fourth Year	4	44.4%

3. Classification

Counts	Analysis %	Respondents
Base	9	100.0%
Classification		
Freshman	-	-
Sophomore	1	11.1%
Junior	4	44.4%
Senior	4	44.4%

4. Cumulative GPA

Counts	Analysis %	Respondents
Base	8	100.0%
Cumulative GPA		
3.5-4.0	1	12.5%
3.0-3.49	4	50.0%
2.5-2.99	2	25.0%
2.0-2.49	1	12.5%
Below 2.0	-	-

5. What is your concentration in Mass Media Arts?

Counts	Analysis %	Respondents
Base	9	100.0%
What is your concentration in Mass Media Arts		
Journalism	2	22.2%
Public Relations Management	3	33.3%
Radio / TV / Film	4	44.4%

6. What were your primary reasons for choosing Mass Media Arts as a major: Check All That Apply

Counts	Analysis %	Respondents
Base	9	100.0%
What were your primary reasons for choosing Mass Media Arts?		
Leads to a specific career	5	55.6%
Like the field	7	77.8%
Prestigious job	1	11.1%
Get a permanent full-time job	1	11.1%

7. Internship placement site:

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Internship placement site:	
In State	9 100.0%

8. Internship Salary:

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Internship Salary:	
Paid	3 33.3%
Unpaid	6 66.7%

9. Internship Credit Options

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Internship Credit Options	
1-15	8 88.9%
Non-credit	1 11.1%

10. Length of recent internship experience

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Length of recent internship experience	
1 Semester	3 33.3%
2 Semesters (Fall/Spring)	5 55.6%
Summer only	1 11.1%

11. Internship work load:

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Internship work load:	
Full-time (35 hours or more)	2 22.2%
Half-time (20-34 hours)	4 44.4%
Part-time (under 19 hours)	3 33.3%

12. Amount of additional credit hours taken while completing your internship: (Do NOT include your internship credits)

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Amount of additional credit hours taken while completing ...	
21	1 11.1%
16	1 11.1%
15	4 44.4%
0	3 33.3%

13. Prior to this internship have you interned before?

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Prior to this internship have you interned before?	
Yes	5 55.6%
No	4 44.4%

14. If yes, was it with the same em

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
If yes, was it with the same employer?	
Yes	- -
No	9

15. Indicate the media sector/career track you interned in:

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	6 100.0%
Indicate the media sector/career track you interned in:	
Advertising	1 16.7%
Films/TV Studios	1 16.7%
Journalism, Mass C- ommunication/Media	1 16.7%
Public Relations/Image Management	1 16.7%
Publishing - Newspaper or Magazines	1 16.7%
Other (Please Specify in the box below)	1 16.7%

Other: Entertainment/ Music

16. Were you offered a full-time job by the organization you recently interned?

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	8 100.0%
Were you offered a full-time job by the organization you ...	
Yes	2 25.0%
No	6 75.0%

Reasons for Your Internship Experience

17. Why did you choose to participate in the internship? Check All That Apply

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Why did you choose to participate in the internship? Chec...	
Gain hands on experience in my major area of study	7 77.8%
Become better prepared for employment in my field	7 77.8%
Gain professional development and personal growth	7 77.8%
Learn new skills	7 77.8%
Gain a realistic preview of the workplace	7 77.8%
Network and make professional contacts	8 88.9%
Explore a new organization	3 33.3%
Make money	2 22.2%
Get a full time/permanent job offer from this company	3 33.3%
Fulfill my Curricular or degree requirements	4 44.4%
Receive course credit	4 44.4%
Fulfill my faculty advisor's strong recommendation	1 11.1%
Other (please specify)	- -

Intern Use Of Information Sources For Internships

18. Through which of the following sources did you find your internship? Check One

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Through which of the following sources did you find your ...	
Academic department advisor/Faculty	2 22.2%
Peer student referral	2 22.2%
Posting on an internship job board website (internships.com)	1 11.1%
Social networks (FACEBOOK, LINKEDIN, TWITTER)	2 22.2%
Other (Please specify)	2 22.2%

Other: Online, On my own

Intern Match with Internship Employer

20. Were you matched and placed with an internship employer?

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Were you matched and placed with an internship employer?	
Yes	- -
No	9 100.0%

If yes, by whom?

Intern Use Of Campus Career Center Services

19. Which campus career center services did you utilize for your internship? Check All Apply

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	9 100.0%
Which campus career center services did you utilize for y...	
Internship placement guidance	1 11.1%
I did not use the campus Career Services	7 77.8%
Other (Please Specify)	1 11.1%

Other: None

Internship Program Design For Meeting Student Needs

21. Before beginning your internship which of the following was made available to you and by whom? Campus Career Services Center, Mass Media Arts Department Faculty Advisor (Coordinator/Supervisor), or Host Internship Employer?

Counts Analysis % Respondents	Total	Campus Career Services ...	Mass Media Arts Departm...	Host Internsh- ip Employer
Base	90	1 1.1%	41 45.6%	58 64.4%
Clearly written definition of internship program and description of services at the institution	9	-	5 55.6%	5 55.6%
Materials on Internship Program purpose, expected learning objectives and responsibilities of the institution, the employer and the interns	9	-	4 44.4%	6 66.7%
Orientation training session, workshop or a course for interns	9	-	4 44.4%	5 55.6%
Policies and procedures guide or manual for interns to follow before, during and after interning	9	-	3 33.3%	6 66.7%
Application process guidelines for interns	9	-	4 44.4%	6 66.7%
Application forms for interns	9	1 11.1%	6 66.7%	6 66.7%
Agreement contract for interns	9	-	4 44.4%	6 66.7%

Internship Program Experience - At The Institution

22. Please rate the following statements based on your experience at this institution related to your most recent internship.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	Total	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Base	99	18 18.2%	50 50.5%	27 27.3%	3 3.0%	1 1.0%
I had a dedicated internship supervisor (academic coordinator or faculty advisor) at this institution	9	1 11.1%	5 55.6%	3 33.3%	-	-
I was made aware of the expected learning outcomes for my internship experience (i.e. knowledge, skills, and attitude that I should gain from my experience)	9	-	7 77.0%	2 22.2%	-	-
My internship supervisor established and communicated clear expectations of my work responsibilities with my employer	9	2 22.2%	6 66.7%	1 11.1%	-	-
My internship supervisor worked with my employer and provided close oversight throughout my internship experience (before, during and after)	9	2 22.2%	4 44.4%	2 22.2%	1 11.1%	-
I had a clear understanding of all the requirements that I must meet to earn internship course credits	9	2 22.2%	4 44.4%	3 33.3%	-	-
My internship supervisor regularly monitored and evaluated my performance and provided constructive feedback on my progress	9	1 11.1%	5 55.6%	2 22.2%	1 11.1%	-
My internship supervisor provided me the opportunity to evaluate my experience and present it to my department	9	1 11.1%	6 66.7%	2 22.2%	-	-
My internship was mandatory requirement for my major/degree	9	2 22.2%	2 22.2%	3 33.3%	1 11.1%	1 11.1%
Even if my internship was not mandatory I would have preferred to do one	9	5 55.6%	2 22.2%	2 22.2%	-	-
All my learning expectations were met during my most recent internship experience	9	1 11.1%	5 55.6%	3 33.3%	-	-
All my internship placement needs were fully met at this institution	9	1 11.1%	4 44.4%	4 44.4%	-	-

Internship Program Experience - At Host Employer Site

23. Please rate the following statements based on your experience with the internship provider related to your most recent internship.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	Total					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Base	117	26 22.2%	50 42.7%	31 26.5%	9 7.7%	1 0.9%
Provided orientation to the organization's culture, internship program purpose, rules and policies, and work related performance expectations	9	1 11.1%	6 66.7%	2 22.2%	- -	- -
Gave me a clearly written job description of my work duties, responsibilities and measurable performance objectives	9	2 22.2%	4 44.4%	2 22.2%	1 11.1%	- -
Clearly communicated expected learning outcomes to enrich my job training	9	3 33.3%	1 11.1%	5 55.6%	- -	- -
Worked with me in developing a work plan with assignments and activities specific to my area of study	9	3 33.3%	3 33.3%	2 22.2%	1 11.1%	- -
Designated work area and resources needed to do my job	9	3 33.3%	3 33.3%	3 33.3%	- -	- -
Showed willingness to train, mentor and coach me all the time	9	2 22.2%	4 44.4%	3 33.3%	- -	- -
Provided sufficient direction/supervision and training	9	2 22.2%	4 44.4%	3 33.3%	- -	- -
Regularly monitored my progress and evaluated my performance	9	2 22.2%	3 33.3%	3 33.3%	1 11.1%	- -
Discussed my performance appraisal with me, provided constructive feedback and made recommendations	9	1 11.1%	5 55.6%	1 11.1%	2 22.2%	- -
Provided professional work environment and encouraged my ideas and input on several occasions	9	2 22.2%	5 55.6%	2 22.2%	- -	- -
Had co-workers who were friendly and helpful	9	4 44.4%	4 44.4%	1 11.1%	- -	- -
Hosted site visits for my faculty supervisor during the work term	9	- -	4 44.4%	2 22.2%	2 22.2%	1 11.1%
Appreciated and recognized my good performance	9	1 11.1%	4 44.4%	2 22.2%	2 22.2%	- -

Internship Program Experience - Student Preparation

24. Please rate the following statements based on your most recent internship experience.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	Total	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Base	99	19 19.2%	51 51.5%	22 22.2%	7 7.1%	-
I felt confident in my ability to connect academic subject matter to a "real world" experience	9	- -	7 77.8%	2 22.2%	-	-
I felt confident in my ability to excel in my professional work environment	9	2 22.2%	5 55.6%	1 11.1%	1 11.1%	-
The courses I took prior to my interning properly prepared me for the internship experience	9	- -	5 55.6%	2 22.2%	2 22.2%	-
I have acquired knowledge beneficial to my current study that has enhanced what I was taught in the classroom	9	2 22.2%	3 33.3%	2 22.2%	2 22.2%	-
I have a better understanding of how to apply the knowledge and skills gained through my academic courses and classroom preparations	9	1 11.1%	6 66.7%	2 22.2%	-	-
I have a better understanding of professional work environment	9	1 11.1%	5 55.6%	3 33.3%	-	-
I have learned more about career options in my field of study	9	3 33.3%	3 33.3%	3 33.3%	-	-
This experience has prepared me for my career goals and actual job	9	3 33.3%	3 33.3%	2 22.2%	1 11.1%	-
After my internship I feel confident I can attain a full-time position in this or similar organization	9	2 22.2%	4 44.4%	3 33.3%	-	-
Overall my preparation for this internship positively impacted my performance	9	1 11.1%	7 77.8%	1 11.1%	-	-
I would recommend internship experience to other students	9	4 44.4%	3 33.3%	1 11.1%	1 11.1%	-

25. Please describe which aspect of your overall internship experience was the most valuable and rewarding to you:

The fact that this internship is what you make it. Nobody is going to hand things out or hold your hand along the way.
Learning more about PR and the entertainment industry
The Company
I learned a lot and gained knowledge and skills to be successful in my field once I graduate!
experience
Thoroughly learning and having hands on experience with video production
The opportunity to understand artist management, travel with the artist for some events and learn the ins and outs of bookings.

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